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RECENT DISCUSSIONS OF MORAL EVOLUTION

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Ethical writers, like biologists, are no longer concerned with the mere fact of evolution. They are dealing with more specific questions of causes and methods. And, as with biology, two stages in the study may be expected. Biologists were at first interested in the historical question: What was the origin of species? They were temporarily satisfied with the answer: Natural selection, operating in conjunction with heredity and variation. Now, however, a clue to the specific method of heredity has been found in Mendelism, the causes operative in producing variation are being discovered by experimentation, and biology is entering upon a constructive stage which promises great results for agriculture, and perhaps also for human health and well-being. Ethics is as yet almost entirely in the descriptive stage. Perhaps we are staggered at the complexity of present problems, and timidly leave to the practical reformer or politician the responsible task of making positive suggestions. But, when the past evolution has been thoroughly analyzed, it may be hoped that social reform and moral education will be more intelligent. The interest of these problems for the student of religion is also obvious. For, to illustrate by one suggestion out of many, we ask: What causes the difference in the ideals of different ages and races? Is it religion, or philosophy, or economic needs and conditions solely? And shall the religious teacher who would hasten the Kingdom of God appeal to the conscience or to the legislature, or, in the conviction that neither

of these avails, shall he stand still and wait for the inventor and the inevitable social revolution? It would be absurd to say that we are yet in a position to answer this old question conclusively, but it is not too much to say that no one can now afford to give dogmatic answers without first considering the complexity of the interaction which is increasingly coming into view between religious, political, economic, aesthetic, and ethical factors.

The important literature in this field which has appeared within the past five years[1] may be conveniently treated by noting what it has to say on one or more of four questions: (1) What is the origin of the idea and feeling of moral obligation? (2) In what respects has there been evolution and what are the chief stages in the process? (3) What are the causes or occasions of changes in morality? (4) What criterion shall be used in judging the evolution, to determine whether a given change is moral advance or the reverse? More particularly at present, this is apt to take the form: Is moral evolution an increasing knowledge of one true standard of right and good *plus* an increased willingness to follow this, or is there an increasing change in the good itself? This is the question of absolutism *versus* pragmatism.

I

In seeking the origin of moral ideas and sentiments, the most significant tendency is the increased importance given to custom. It has long been recognized that custom was the antecedent of conscious moral conduct, but the precise significance of this is

[1] The following books are referred to in the text, although some of them deal only incidentally with the genetic questions which we are considering:

Edward Westermarck, Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas, vol. i, 1906; vol. ii, 1908.

Leonard T. Hobhouse, Morals in Evolution, 1906.

William G. Sumner, Folkways, 1907.

John Dewey and James H. Tufts, Ethics, 1908.

Edward A. Ross, Social Psychology, 1908.

William McDougall, An Introduction to Social Psychology, 1908.

C. H. Cooley, Social Organization, 1909.

Josiah Royce, The Philosophy of Loyalty, 1908.

Hugo Münsterberg, The Eternal Values, 1909.

John Dewey, The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy, 1910.

Addison W. Moore, Pragmatism and its Critics, 1910.

now emerging more clearly. No such comprehensive survey of customs as is afforded by Sumner and Westermarck had previously been available. The very mass of the material undoubtedly brings a certain impression not produced by a presentation less fully attested by documents. But the various studies of social psychology by Tarde, Baldwin, Cooley, Giddings, Wundt, and others had also prepared for a better interpretation of this material. Formerly, too, custom was thought of as belonging chiefly, if not solely, to savage life. We thought of taboos and lucky rites, of "cleanness" and sacrifices, of initiations and the ban upon speaking with a mother-in-law. Westermarck gives us a wealth of such material. But Sumner presents no less impressively the dominant influence of customs as a factor in present civilization. Under the guise of "mores" they shape our thinking and conduct in all except the tiny sphere in which we may be able and willing to do some thinking for ourselves. Ross and Cooley have thrown light upon some of the laws at work in the formation and transmission of such customs. It may be expected that special studies on special manifestations of such group standards and local standards will appear. Instead of viewing our fellows abstractly, and appealing, often with complete futility, to the supposedly unbiassed conscience of an everywhere equal man, we shall recognize the complexity of motives, and though we may not accept the economic or sociological determinism which makes all moral standards the bare resultant of economic and sociological forces, we shall yet appreciate more clearly what may be expected in immediate response, and what may come only as a result of a changed habit of mind. Furthermore, the instructive comparisons made by Westermarck and Hobhouse between the attitudes of various times and peoples inevitably tend to awaken a questioning temper toward many current usages which are now unthinkingly or complacently accepted. To show the likeness between present and savage morality on this and that matter tends alike to increase our respect for the savage and to prevent satisfaction with ourselves.

What, then, is the meaning of custom? How does custom establish itself, and under what conditions? By what agencies is it changed or replaced?

Custom has in it two well-marked factors, somewhat differently phrased by various writers, namely, (a) habit, (b) valuation of a general, or at least non-personal, sort. Thus Hobhouse says:

> It is not merely a habit of action, but it implies also a judgment upon action, and a judgment stated in general and impersonal terms.

Similarly, Westermarck holds that all morality rests on disinterested retributive emotions (kindly or the reverse). But some retributive emotions are not moral. Why is it then, he asks, that disinterestedness, apparent impartiality, and the flavor of generality have become characteristics by which so-called moral emotions are distinguished from other retributive emotions? The solution of this problem, according to Westermarck, lies in the fact that society is the birthplace of the moral consciousness; that the first moral judgments expressed, not the private emotions of isolated individuals, but emotions which were felt by the society at large; that tribal custom was the earliest rule of duty. Customs have been defined as public habits, the habits of a certain circle. But custom is also a rule of conduct, and as such it is a generalization of emotional tendencies. The most salient feature of custom is its generality. It is fixed once for all, and takes no notice of the preferences of individuals. By recognizing the validity of a custom I implicitly admit that the custom is equally binding for me and for you and for all the other members of the society. This involves disinterestedness; I admit that a breach of custom is equally wrong whether I am myself immediately concerned in the act or not. It also involves apparent impartiality. And though a certain rule may have a selfish or partial origin, it becomes a true custom, a moral rule, as soon as the selfishness or the particularity of its makers is lost sight of.

Sumner has used two distinct words to emphasize the two aspects. By "folkways" he thinks of customs chiefly under their aspects of uniformity, repetition, and wide concurrence. But when popular usages and traditions include a judgment that they are conducive to societal welfare, and when they exert a coercion on the individual to conform to them, although they are not co-ordinated by any authority, he calls them "mores."

Doubtless the term "customs" suggests but slightly any moral element, and to bring out strongly the factor of control and emotional approval it is desirable to use a term less neutral. The name "mores" promises to gain acceptance. Sumner, indeed, in his emphasis upon the mores denies that there is any other morality or ethics worthy of study:

> The modern peoples have made morals and morality a separate domain by the side of religion, philosophy, and politics. In that sense morals is an impossible and unreal category. It has no existence and can have none. The word moral means what belongs or appertains to the mores. Therefore the category of morals can never be defined without reference to something outside of itself.

Out of the mores grow institutions and laws, and from time to time philosophers attempt to formulate the ideals found in the mores, and use them as moral standards, supposing that they derive them from some source above experience. But the mores are really the only standard. They are as such true and right for their age and place.

After all, the peculiar character of custom which makes it so close to the moral consciousness has never been better stated than by Grote:

> "Nomos, king of all" . . . moulding the emotions as well as the intellect, according to the local type . . . and reigning under the appearance of habitual, self-suggested tendencies.[2]

All the more significant, if customs, or mores, are so important alike for the origins of morality and for its present continuance and variation, become the questions: How are customs or mores formed? Does the habit explain the authority? or was there some sort of value which gave rise to the habit? or is neither of these explanations adequate? Let us then ask, first, How did the habit get formed? and, secondly, What gives certain habits their peculiar value and authority?

First, on the origin of habits it is not safe to speak too positively, for the most important customs go back into unknown ages. But there are several things to be borne in mind. Ex-

[2] Cited in Dewey and Tufts, Ethics, p. 173.

planations tend to emphasize either (a) the instinctive, impulsive, or emotional aspect of action, or (b) the intelligent adaptation of means to ends. Blood revenge, for example,—is this a sort of blind response to injury, analogous to winking the eye or striking out with the fist for protection? Or is it a useful means of protecting the tribe? Or in the case of marriage customs and taboos, does the custom of taking a wife outside the group rest on supposed advantage, or merely on emotional response to novelty? Students of religion have discussed a similar alternative. Does a ritual rest on some idea, or does the idea, the myth, arise after the ritual? As the tendency is toward the belief that the ritual is usually older than its myth, so the general tendency is to regard customs as arising largely in relatively unreflective fashion. Comparative psychology has some data which at least are in accord with this. Modern studies of animals show that they learn largely by the method of trial and error. A rat or squirrel seems to learn his way through a maze, or how to open a door, not by a study of its construction and a resort to general principle (the method of the expert scientist), nor by accidentally finding the correct way, and thenceforth discarding completely all false movements. His "curve" of learning does not change so decisively at any one point. The process appears to be rather a gradual discard of fruitless efforts, and a retention of the successful elements. Experienced pleasure may help to fix the latter, pain to eliminate the former. Similarly, it may be argued, men had to get food, defend themselves, reproduce their kind. They either succeeded or failed, and the successful ways survived.

But it is evident that most of the customs which are morally significant cannot be explained solely as the results of habit. For ceremonies which are performed once a year for the returning spring or ingathering of harvest, or at irregular intervals, as upon occasion of births, marriages, and deaths, cannot be based merely upon the physiology of repeated acts. The structure which carries these customs is not the individual's nervous system considered by itself: it is the social organization.

This operates in part just by its mass. If a number of persons are to do the same thing, such as dancing, or singing, or carrying, or if they are to act jointly in hunting, or in co-operation, as

in converse, there must be uniformity. And imitation is constantly operative in passing down ways, once used. The emotional enhancement due to mass or concerted action deepens the impression, especially when the aesthetic charm of order is involved.

Moreover the general notion is common that certain ways of acting are "lucky" and others unlucky. This is not so rationalistic a method as a scientist's calculation of the practical utility of various agencies, and still it is none the less a philosophy. Sumner makes much of this tendency to dwell on good and bad luck—especially bad luck:

> Primitive men ascribed all incidents to the agency of men or of ghosts and spirits. Good and ill luck were attributed to the superior powers, and were supposed to be due to their pleasure or displeasure at the conduct of men. This group of notions constitutes goblinism. It furnishes a complete world-philosophy.

The four elemental needs or interests out of which folkways sprang, in Sumner's view, are hunger, love, vanity, and fear.

The use of the term "vanity" to cover the whole sphere of social recognition, reminding us, as it does, of Mandeville, is one of many traces of Sumner's refusal to take account of modern social psychology. McDougall, starting with a psychological analysis based on the various instincts and their corresponding emotions, offers a wider and, I think, a more satisfactory list of primary activities. In any case, resentment or anger can hardly be omitted, and Westermarck makes this, in its special form of public or sympathetic resentment, the source of all the moral customs. In his opinion, custom is a moral rule only on account of the indignation called forth by its transgression. In its ethical aspect it is nothing but a generalization of emotional tendencies, applied to certain modes of conduct, and transmitted from generation to generation.

But, while the simplest form of acts may become habitual without any great degree of reflection, it is obvious that few acts, even of those required to satisfy hunger, are performed without a considerable amount of thought. All such conceptions as good or bad luck, and such customs as those of initiation, lucky rites

to insure rains, birth and death customs implying belief in spirits, involve some look ahead, and often some conception of group welfare. Hence it is comprehensible that we find the Australian old men deliberating at great length over the details of initiation and totem customs. Ross shows how customs radiate from certain leaders or classes to the masses. It may be impossible for you or me to start a new custom, but it is easy for royalty to set a fashion, and, for a time at least, wealth can make success the dominant note in the mores of American society.

To sum up, customs, while seemingly analogous to habits in the individual, cannot be explained by physiological repetition. They embody a philosophy, and depend for their transmission not only upon the simpler process of imitation, but upon the more positive method of training.

Secondly, whence comes the binding quality, or the value, in custom? If we suppose that the custom arose because of its practical utility, then, of course, we have already answered our second question, and this would be just as true even if such a custom as burying the possessions of the deceased with him is to our notion of economics an absurd or injurious practice. If people believed that to show this kindness to the dead was useful to the living, that would be enough. But there are many customs for which savages themselves give no reason, and for these a sanction has been sought either in the bare force of habit itself or in emotional reaction.

There is no doubt a considerable constraint exercised by habit itself. "Whatever be the foundation for a certain practice," says Westermarck, "and however trivial it may be, the unreflecting mind has a tendency to disapprove of any deviation from it for the simple reason that such a deviation is unusual. As Abraham Tucker observes, 'it is a constant argument among the common people, that a thing must be done and ought to be done, because it always has been done.'" Professor Ames in his *Psychology of Religious Experience* states the psychology of the process thus:

> Habitual actions establish themselves as the lines of least resistance. They are familiar and put the object of them at ease. He is at home in them. So much is this the case that in moments of leisure the successfully thrilling events of the chase or battle are

often reënacted, and this is undoubtedly an important factor in the origin of ceremonial. They serve to reinstate the emotional experience of the real events.

As an illustration of a custom originating in emotional interests but now sanctioned by habit, Professor Ames cites dress:

> The history of dress seems to show that it originated with amulets and ornaments and was fostered by the love of display which it favored, but its establishment resulted in the feeling that it was proper to conceal the body, that is, the habit of having the body covered must not be broken. This is the ground for saying that the custom of wearing clothes created modesty.

This position as to the positive power of habit is in the opinion of Ames strengthened by a consideration of taboo, which he would define as the "negative side of custom," the thou-shalt-not, as custom is the thou-shalt of primitive life. Taboo in many cases seems to signify just what is strange or unusual, and the psychology of this is that the very disposition to act in a certain way affords resistance to any deviation from that course. And he makes a highly ingenious application to the explanation of sex-taboos. Crawley in his work, *The Mystic Rose*, had collected a mass of material showing the wide range of sex-taboos and the fear entertained by each sex of certain functions, occupations, and objects associated with the other. A warrior, for example, fears to have a woman look upon him lest he be weakened. The separation of the sexes is due to such or similar fears. Ames would reverse this:

> The more defensible position would be that the segregation of the sexes was due to natural causes, such as occupation, food-supply, capacities, and interests. The characteristic habits of each sex which thus arose brought their natural sanctions and restraints, or taboos. These taboos in turn exercised a reciprocal influence and contributed to emphasize the segregation from which they originally arose.[3]

The other important taboos, attaching to leaders, strangers, and the dead, are explained in similar ways.

It is obvious that there is a large field of moral sentiments

[3] Psychology of Religious Experience, chap. iv.

in which it would be interesting to test this theory that habit creates binding force. A good part of our morals are class morals. Are, then, the sentiments sanctioning the gentleman's code, or the commercial code, or the laborer's code, due to the habits of these classes, which were in turn created by occupation? Leaving this for the moment, it is evident that in such customs as dress, or sex-taboos, there is a factor which can be called habit only in a metaphorical sense. This appears in the following quotation from Westermarck, who is arguing for the genesis of emotion from habit:

> In the behavior of the Aleut, who "is bashful if caught doing anything unusual among his people," and in the average European's dread of appearing singular, we recognize the influence of the same force of habit.

But is "the dread of appearing singular" due in any sense to habit? This seems to be an extraordinary statement, to be explained only on the assumption that the social group is loosely conceived as a physiological organism, so that what is "unusual" is opposed to the habitual. In society, however, we constantly see illustrations where the habitual (in the proper sense of the term, meaning repeated action by an individual) becomes "singular" or "unusual," if measured by a group standard, and so is at once condemned. It is *failure to conform to the group*, not failure to repeat a past act, which excites the painful emotion. The tension is not primarily between habit and novelty, but between social self (used in James's sense as "what others think of me") and some other set of images. It is a case of mass phenomena rather than of repetition. This would seem to be the larger factor also in the case of dress. And, in general, conformity to custom does not primarily mean repeating; it means that the young conform to the old, the plastic to the well-organized. Ritual impresses its values not only by the practice it gives in doing, but by the strongly emotional conditions under which it is done.

Another criticism upon the conception that habit is adequate to produce a binding influence is made by Professor Sharp in *A Study of the Influence of Custom on the Moral Judgment*.[4]

[4] University of Wisconsin Publications.

From a study of the moral judgments made by University of Wisconsin students upon certain questions of casuistry he finds no ground for supposing the basis of such judgments to be mere habit. He finds a teleological factor—some reference to the welfare of the agent or of others—in so large a proportion of cases as to convince him that this is generally present. Questions have been raised as to the adequacy of the method employed in this inquiry, but the necessity of having some account of our own actual moral judgments (as well as of the customs of savages) which Sharp forcefully presents, cannot be gainsaid.

To resume our query as to what gives binding force to custom, it should not be inferred from the quotation from Westermarck that he regards habit as the chief source of the binding force and value in custom. It is in the emotions that he discovers what gives value. Specifically, moral value is due to one kind of retributive emotions, namely, to those which are public and sympathetic. This is argued especially against the utilitarian conception. A crucial case is found in our attitude toward punishment. Why do we punish, and why does our moral sentiment approve punishment? The penalties of criminal law, Westermarck believes, have in all ages and among all peoples substantially expressed the amount of public indignation, though the purpose of protecting society has doubtless also been present. But if this latter were the determining factor, it might be plausibly urged that the more atrocious crimes, like parricide, are so rare that society needs little protection and that consequently the punishment should be light. Or, if reformation be the end, then the hopeless and hardened criminal should not be punished at all, since it is useless to try to reform him. Westermarck has several highly interesting chapters here, showing who are held responsible for acts, how far agents under intellectual disability have been treated as responsible, and how far motives are considered. Nothing but the will, he finds, is held to be morally good or bad; and this, he believes, confirms his view as to the essentially emotional origin of all moral distinctions.

> Moral judgments are based on conduct and character, because such judgments spring from moral emotions; because the moral emotions are retributive emotions; because a retributive emotion is a reactive

> attitude of mind, either kindly or hostile, toward a living being (or something looked upon in the light of a living being) regarded as a cause of pleasure or as a cause of pain; and because a living being is regarded as a true cause of pleasure or pain only in so far as this feeling is assumed to be caused by its will.

A larger range of emotions which play an important part in moral valuation would be indicated by many. Thus Dewey, speaking of control over impulses as one of the elements in moral conduct, remarks that calculation of the utilitarian type is not adequate to deal with the temptation which tends to fling consequences aside and yield to the excitement of the moment.

> With those who are carried away habitually by some mode of excitement the disease and the incapacity to take the proffered remedy or reflection are one and the same thing. Only some other passion will accomplish the desired control. With the Greeks, it was aesthetic passion, love of the grace and beauty, the rhythm and harmony, of a self-controlled life. With the Romans it was the passion for dignity, power, honor of personality, evidenced in rule of appetite. Both of these motives remain among the strong allies of ordered conduct. But the passion for purity, the sense of something degrading and foul in surrender to the base, an interest in something spotless, free from adulteration, are, in some form or other, the chief resource in overcoming the tendency of excitement to usurp the governance of the self.[5]

A further reason for assigning importance to the emotional factor is offered by Professor G. H. Mead.[6] He points out the fundamental part of emotion in all attitudes toward persons. All my consciousness has its emotional tone. When I set apart certain of its contents as things, I divest them of this tone. But contact with persons evokes the emotional content, and when we think of our objects as personal, the emotional remains as a—perhaps as *the*—distinctive quality. The primary inference which the author draws from this is that social psychology, which deals with the personal antecedents of emotion, is as necessary a pre-

[5] Dewey and Tufts, Ethics, pp. 409 f.; cf. also J. H. Tufts, "Moral Value," in Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods, vol. v, 1908, pp. 517–522.

[6] Psychological Bulletin, vol., vi, 1909, pp. 401–408.

requisite to psychology as is physiological psychology, which describes the antecedents of mental processes from another point of view. It is evident, however, that the consideration has important bearings on the genesis of moral sentiment.

Starting, then, with a question about the customs and mores, we have been led over into general considerations as to the moral consciousness which repeat in new form the question of Hume: "Are moral distinctions based on reason or on feeling?" And we find it no longer possible to decide for either alternative. The control and valuation of life involve habit, emotion, and reason. Earlier forms of control have more of the elements of habit; more developed types have more of the rational. The emotional element attends all the way up the scale; and even in custom the rational factor is present in some degree. So far as any practice or belief tends to sink into mere habit, it has little moral value. As attention is demanded, the moral possibilities increase. Customs which attend such important events or crises as birth, puberty, marriage, death, seed-time and harvest, new moon, quarrels, injuries, hospitality,—these customs pass readily into true mores. For they are in essence a control of life for important ends; and as glorified or enhanced by aesthetic elements of dance and song, of decoration, commemoration, or dramatic rehearsal, they constitute—not indeed the full personal morality of the highest level—but the morality which we all obey on many of the levels of conduct.

II

In what respect has there been moral evolution, and what are the chief stages in the process? This is the problem which Hobhouse treats, and he discusses it under the two heads of the standard, or rule of action, and of the basis or reason given for obeying it. The standard has been embodied in custom and law, in ethical institutions. The basis—the ideas underlying morality—is sought in a study of religions and of the great ethical systems. The institutions selected by Hobhouse to show evolution of the moral standard are the general social and political structure, law and justice, marriage and the status of woman, intertribal and international relations, class relations with especial reference

to slavery, property, and the treatment of poverty. This is a much less extended list of topics than is presented by Westermarck, and the treatment is less copious. But on the other hand the perspective is better, and the trends of progress are more easily noted. These trends as traced by Hobhouse in the various institutions show certain broad lines of resemblance. For the religious and social teacher or reformer, frequently discouraged by the slow movement of the particular cause he champions, it is well worth while to stand where he can take a survey of centuries rather than of years or decades. And I doubt whether any one can presume to discuss intelligently such current problems as divorce, equal suffrage, the administration of justice in our courts, property rights and responsibilities, until he has traced sympathetically the status of woman, the methods of judicial practice, and the queer mixtures of reason and unreason, of force and kindness, which are found in the various ages. With vision thus trained we shall be less likely to fall into a state of blind admiration for things as they are, but we shall also comprehend better the difficulties in the way of such a reform as that of the equal standard for morals between the sexes, or that of apportioning educational opportunities to children upon the basis of their capacities rather than upon that of the pecuniary status of their parents.

The general line of advance is "from status to contract," from kin-group, through force and authority, to organization in the interests of individual freedom and social co-operation; from looser family structure, through closer ties controlled by force or property conceptions, to unions giving at the same time greater personal freedom and greater responsibility; from blood-feud to public courts possessing greater authority yet securing better protection to the individual; from early communism, through property rights based on force and recognizing few restrictions, to a system of property involving in increasing degree a social control; and finally, in the treatment of the poor, "from simple communism through the paternal benevolence of a superior caste to the recognition of a mutual obligation as between the individual and the state." There is thus a double movement, and different theorists are apt to stress the one or the other aspect according to

their own interests. On the one hand there is growth in the powers and opportunities of the individual. On the other, the social control is both strengthened and extended. Liberty and order thus often clash. Yet in the conceptions of rights, both aspects are implicit, for the individual relies upon society to support him in these, and it will support him only if these "rights" are not against the social order. "In the higher form of social organization we have seen order and liberty drawing together again, the underlying truth which unites them being simply that the best ordered society is that which gives most scope to its component members to make the best of themselves, while the 'best' in human nature is that which contributes to the harmony and onward movement of society."

The reasons or motives for moral conduct likewise show an evolution. For Westermarck, since the moral attitude is always fundamentally one of retributive emotions, the evolution is chiefly either in the increase of rational elements or in the extension of the group included within the emotional sphere. Aversions and disgusts, sympathies and antipathies, are the earlier forms of moral emotions. When we realize that an act does no real harm, we can hardly—if we are sufficiently rational—give it moral censure. So a *deliberate* resentment is not likely to be felt toward a person who intended no injury. The other line of advance, namely, the extension of the group toward which duties are recognized from family or clan to humanity, is, in his view, consequent upon the expansion of altruistic sentiment,—an order of dependence which many would reverse.

Hobhouse has a more complex psychology, and essays a scheme of development which would relate the ethical to the general philosophy—or religion—of the age or people. As Westermarck's view might be called an emotional theory tempered by advancing intelligence, so Hobhouse's might be called rationalism. On this theory ethical evolution is the evolution of the ethical idea, of which the central element is obligation. Obligation is at first chiefly a matter of resentment, not founded on any general ethical principle. Life and property are defended by blood-vengeance, but not *because* life and property are clearly set up as ends to be guarded. Magic and taboo are strong sanctions. In earlier

stages of civilization a step in advance is taken when such rights as life and property are recognized by the community, and in many cases placed under the protection of some god. A god who punishes acts because they are wrong is very different from a god who merely avenges an injury. "His existence is recognition of the moral idea." But the divine world is long a blur of the just and unjust, so that an ethical ideal has to be worked out. This has been done in close connection with the spiritualized ideal of religion; and forgiveness, self-sacrifice, humility, find a place. Finally, philosophical criticism remodels ethical conceptions in accordance with the principle that every rule of conduct must be based upon the demonstrable needs of human life. "Obligation, resting at first on occult forces, or the resentment of vindictive spirits, and then on the wrath of a not unjust god, comes to be based on the nobler desire to be at one with God or to realize a higher spiritual life, and finally, extrinsic consequence being dispensed with, on the inherent goodness of the life which it renders possible."

It will be observed that, although neither Westermarck nor Hobhouse finds the origin of morality in religion, Hobhouse gives religion a highly important part in the process of moral evolution. Westermarck recognizes the enormous influence of religion, but balances the gains over against the losses.

> Religion or superstition (as the case may be) has on the one hand stigmatized murder and suicide, on the other it has commended human sacrifice and certain cases of voluntary self-destruction. It has inculcated humanity and charity, but has also led to the cruel persecution of persons embracing another creed. It has emphasized the duty of truth-speaking, and has itself been a cause of pious fraud. It has promoted both cleanly habits and filthiness. It has enjoined labor and abstinence from labor, sobriety and drunkenness, marriage and celibacy, chastity and temple prostitution.

Similarly Hobhouse, in a passage too long for quotation, gives a careful consideration of the debits and credits of Christianity—especially of organized Christianity—in the accounts of moral progress. One can imagine nothing more helpful as a foundation for the candid and honest presentation of the place of religion and of Christianity than a study of this material.

III

What are the causes of moral evolution? During the period of Darwin and his contemporaries this question naturally took the form of asking, How far is natural selection active in the field of ethics? Darwin himself, Wallace, Bagehot, Spencer, all discussed the values of the several virtues for aiding survival. But just as biologists are at present not asking, Why do new characters survive? but, How do they originate? so the students of ethical evolution face the question, What forces, social and psychological, bring about the upward steps? Sumner is very positive in his answer as to what does *not* change the mores. It is not ethics. In fact he frequently condemns the attempts to change mores by moral theory. The actual causes to which he attributes such change are usually economic.

> Wilberforce did not overthrow slavery, natural forces reduced to the service of man and the discovery of new land set men "free" from great labor, and new ways suggested new sentiments of humanity and ethics. . . . Witchcraft and trial by torture were not abolished by argument. Critical knowledge and thirst for reality made them absurd. . . . The notion of obscenity is very modern. It is due to the modern development of the arts of life and the mode of life under steam and machinery. . . . All the operations and necessities of life can be carried on with greater privacy and more observation of conventional order and decorum. . . . Pair marriage has swept all other forms away. It is the system of the urban-middle-capitalist class. It has gained strength in all the new countries, where all men and women were equal within a small margin and the women bore their share of the struggle for existence. . . . Democracy and pair marriage are now produced by the same conditions. Both are contingent and transitory. In aristocratic society, a man's family arrangements are his own prerogative. When life becomes harder it will become aristocratic, and concubinage may be expected to arise again.

Still more broadly,

> There are no ethical forces in history. . . . A people sometimes adopts an ideal of national vanity, which includes ambition, but an ethical ideal no group ever has.

One might infer from these and numerous other citations which might be made that no conscious effort for improvement in morals had ever been, or could ever be, of any influence,—in other words, that morality is the only region in which there is no use in knowing what is wanted and then trying to get it. And yet this would be to make Sumner more consistent than he is. What he is really concerned to show is that it is only by careful study of the *ethos* and sentiments of a people that new ideals can be made to live, and that changes must be very gradual. Our own mores as regards sex-relations come down by tradition from the prophetic revolt of the tenth century before Christ in Israel. This was rooted in the hostility of primitive rustic mores to the luxury of commercial cities. But the experiences of various societies since then have confirmed the prophetic attitude toward sensuality and built up a strong conviction. In the case of amusements, especially, intelligent control is in place. "Amusements always present a necessity for moral education and moral will." And in one instance, that of slavery, moral motives have succeeded in getting themselves recognized as superior to other interests. "Slavery is now considered impossible, socially and politically evil, and so not available for economic gain, even if it could win that. It is the only case in the history of the mores where the so-called moral motive has been made controlling."

The truth in Sumner's contention doubtless is that men are only in part governed by purely rational motives. Just as the mores are a joint product of instinct and need, of habit and purpose, of fictitious belief and reasoned expedience, of emotion and idea, so individuals and peoples are moved by a complex of forces. The present moral awakening in business and public life is doubtless due in part to those whose economic interests were affected by the enormous powers of corporate wealth. And few modern moralists would question that a wrong course of conduct will in the long run injure some one. But the most effective appeal against any practice is not made until it is declared to be wrong or unjust. And this implies that the ethical aspect of the custom or practice is separated out from the merely habitual and brought to attention. It may be vain to cry when every one is satisfied, but when the pressure or collision of social or psychic

forces raises an issue, then the prophet and the reformer get their hearing. The socialist, who insists strenuously on the economic interpretation of history, nevertheless carries on a constant campaign for the triumph of his cause, and is far from being disposed to stand still and see the salvation of the social revolution.

Two questions then remain: What brings on such crises or collisions as to bring moral issues to attention? and Why is it that in such crises the human race—or at any rate certain strains of it—has risen to the new situation and constructed a higher standard?

The first question has had many answers. In general, however, the conflict between the assertive interests of the individual and the control exercised by the group will include a large number of special cases. Economic changes, the advance of the arts and sciences, military conflicts, afford external occasions; sexual passions, desire for property, for mastery or liberty, for esteem and position, are the internal strivings which create new forms of tension. And, beside the collisions between individual and society, the crash of whole peoples on a great scale may overwhelm the existing code. The Jewish view of the relation between virtue and prosperity seems to have been changed by the captivity. The influence of the frontier and its attendant democracy has largely superseded in many of its details such a class-code as that of the "gentleman." Professor Thomas C. Hall's recent *History of Ethics within Organized Christianity* shows the influence upon ethical ideals of the struggle by which a community organizes itself to resist hostile forces and to control its members. There is no more inviting field for the student of moral evolution than the more specific analysis of certain great ethical ideals within the history of civilization and an examination of the causes which have made them what they were, or are.

This leads us to consider the two possible methods for studying moral evolution, the one by topics, the other by regions or epochs or peoples. Professor Thomas makes a very clear statement on this point:[7]

> Westermarck's work perhaps affords the best example of a method of presenting ethnological materials which is very useful, but which

[7] William I. Thomas, Source Book for Social Origins, 1909, p. 857.

> has its limitations. It corresponds with the method of arranging materials in museums developed by Pitt-Rivers in England, a number of years ago. By this method all the knives, throwing-sticks, or other articles of a particular kind were brought together in one place, with a view to exhibiting the steps in the development of this article. But our great museums are now recognizing that it is on the whole better to arrange materials on the principle of presenting the culture of a given region as a whole. No object can be completely understood when separated from the whole culture of which it is a part, and no culture can be understood when separated from the whole culture of which it is a part, and no culture can be understood when its fragments are dislocated.

Applying this to our specific problem, the ethics of the Puritans, of the northern or the southern states, of modern business, of labor unions, can be understood only in the full setting of all the factors of English and American life.

The second question, What in the human consciousness enables it to rise to a new situation? takes us into the heart of metaphysics and theology. It is like asking, Why has protoplasm advanced to man, and man to such heights as are seen in heroes, artists, prophets, discoverers, and sages? Darwin taught how variations might be sifted; he did not know how they arise, though he supposed it to be by small fluctuations; DeVries shows that in some cases they start by sudden decisive steps. The advocates of an "orthogenic" theory hold that evolution moves, not in all directions, but by a right line of tendency. Bergson insists that all evolution is "creative," so that it is not merely futile but erroneous to seek for causes of the new. Just because the new is new, it has no explanation in the past. If consciousness "rises" to a situation, we cannot explain this higher level by anything else. The answer to our question must then read: When one is born of the spirit, we may not detect whence it cometh, but in dealing with the new situation the spirit shows its actual presence. Consciousness discloses its own creative character by its new ideals. And this, I think, comes near the truth which religion has always had at heart. The spirit is not limited by its constitution to what has been. It is not capable of complete statement in mechanistic terms. It may enter into life.

And yet the question may be very real, Why does man sometimes rise to a crisis and sometimes not? Certain civilizations have failed to meet crises in the past. Is there any indication as to whether our present civilization and moral consciousness will prove adequate to future crises? Without presuming to predict, it may be permitted to set down, without attempt at discussion, certain elements which at least offer hope. These are, first, the growing opposition to war, both for economic and for moral reasons. War in the past has wasted an incalculable amount of the best blood. Secondly, the increased strength of moral consciousness springing from the greater area of common discussion and common criticism. To Christendom, which represented a certain degree of moral unity, are now added Japan and China as peoples contributing their ideals and making demands for fair treatment while at the same time they submit their standards to discussion. Thirdly, the broader basis, within each community, which supports moral values. In other words, a democracy is in the long run safer than an aristocracy. This is not to deny that moral leaders are always few. But for available leaders it is desirable to draw upon the widest range, and leaders responsible to all sorts and conditions of men are in the end more likely to bring the whole community in safety through its perils. In the fourth place should be named the larger resources which intelligence now commands. Individual genius may reach no higher levels than at earlier times; but the method by which it can proceed successfully is more clearly seen, the collective wisdom is more available. On the one hand, education is more prevalent; on the other, research is more thoroughly organized and better equipped.

IV

The question of a standard by which moral latitude and longitude may be estimated leads at once to the issue between Absolutism and Pragmatism. At first blush there is no common ground. The absolutist sees in the pragmatist's "goods" only a welter of individual preferences, a chaos of temporary satisfactions. Over against these Münsterberg would set "eternal values" of an "over-self." These consist especially in finding iden-

tity—identity between purpose and fulfilment, between will and act. "Self-faithfulness, self-loyalty, is accordingly the only moral obligation and the only moral value." The essence of the "overself," likewise, is the "will toward identical maintaining." In different language Royce maintains that loyalty—under which he subsumes the moral life—implies in the last analysis that the cause to which loyalty devotes itself is true and real. "'True' must mean 'eternally true,' if it means anything; 'real' refers to the 'whole of experience,' which, while including all temporal happenings, is itself an 'eternal truth.' Unity with all life is the ideal test of the partial aims." Conversely, the pragmatist or evolutionist sees in a mere identifying no very important value. He is suspicious of an eternal value as indicating something fixed, instead of something to be constructed, and argues that the supreme responsibility imposed by modern morality is that of working out new standards, as *versus* merely accepting or even finding something already made. He maintains that the "city out of sight" is of no help in actually directing our footsteps. He claims that ethics must follow modern science in renouncing "essences," and for the effort to define an absolute good must substitute the effort to locate particular goods and evils, in order to attain the one and remove or lessen the other. To the religious student it is suggestive to note that even the writers of the Bible used expressions which fit into both the absolutist and the evolutionist ideal. God is "the same," the "eternal"; but he is also the "living," and men are "workers together with God." And in this antithesis there is a more than superficial analogy to that between Calvinism and Arminianism.

As the "evolutionary" or "experimental" view is less familiar, it may need further statement. As it is presented by Professor Dewey,[8] the fundamental change of attitude which it implies is this:

> The classic theories all alike assumed the existence of *the* end, the *summum bonum*, the final goal; and of the separate moral force that moves to that goal. . . . The transformation in attitude is the growing belief that the proper business of intelligence is discrimination of multiple and present goods, and of the varied and immediate

[8] John Dewey, The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy.

> means of their realization; not search for the one remote aim. [What we need is] study of the conditions out of which come the obstacles and the resources of adequate life, and developing and testing the ideas that, as working hypotheses, may be used to diminish the causes of evil, and to buttress and expand the sources of good.

To the fear that such a removal of a transcendental good leaves men adrift and free to follow each his own inclination, he urges that the change may relieve men from responsibility for what they cannot do, but will promote thoughtful consideration of what they may do.

> If we leave absolute goods in the background, we can neither evade nor escape the problem of making more sure and expensive the share of all men in natural and real goods.

And again:

> Were it a thousand times dialectically demonstrated that life as a whole is regulated by a transcendent principle to a final inclusive goal, none the less truth and error, health and disease, good and evil, hope and fear, in the concrete would remain just what and where they now are. To improve our education, to ameliorate our manners, to advance our politics, we must have recourse to specific conditions of generation.

Professor A. W. Moore claims for this position that it is the democratic movement in morals; it is the demand for the full conditions of moral responsibility. It is the claiming of the moral franchise, the right to participate in the construction, as well as the execution of the ideal. "If there is to be such a thing as moral experience aboard our craft, we must have a real part, not only in hoisting sail and washing down the decks, but in laying the course of the ship." Nor does laying the course mean merely "running for a harbor already built from all eternity." It means "building new shores"—not building them out of caprice or individual dreams, much less out of private possessions and desires, but out of the organized habits and institutions of the world in which we live, and with the method of science. In this actual world of human nature we are not free to set up any and every goal we please. We must reckon with

our fellows' rights and claims, with the growing capacities and aspirations of man. Nothing will satisfy which does not challenge and evoke these.

Certain more definite characteristics of what Professor Dewey regards as moral progress may be found in the *Ethics* of which he is joint author, for the question of moral advance for the race is not separable finally from that of individual character. The criterion here set up is that the "true or moral satisfaction" is found in the exercise of powers which produce harmony, reenforcement, expansion of life. And what end fulfils these conditions? Only the social good. The only genuinely reasonable moral knowledge is sympathetic. The final problem of morality is to form, from a natural self of impulse and instinct, a voluntary self in which socialized desires and affections are dominant.

Perhaps it may have occurred to the reader by this time that there is not so absolute an abyss between the programmes as was at first suggested. "Loyalty to loyalty" may not indeed throw its emphasis so strongly upon justice and democracy, and yet it is not in antagonism with these. And, conversely, the evolutionist cheerfully admits that it is in a "catholic and farsighted theory"—not in a temporary adjustment to the desires of the moment—that philosophy finds its task. In truth, the difference in point of view persists just because pragmatist and absolutist stand each upon a necessary element in moral judgment. Can there be an intelligent and thorough-going moral life without principles? Few since Socrates and Plato have attempted to say, "Yes, we need only impulse." Can principles be determined without reference to the impulses and affections, the daily needs as well as the more inclusive and permanent ends? The same Plato said frankly, "The knowledge which is only superhuman is ridiculous in man." One might say further that at one period in human development the value of definite principles has appeared to be of supreme importance, and at another the value or necessity of reconstruction, even as in theology transcendence and immanence have each made contributions. Just at present many believe that we have been standing too long upon the eighteenth-century conception of reason and the

early nineteenth-century conception of liberty. "Absolutists" in political science have admired greatly the fixity of the Constitution of the United States; "but it must be remembered," to quote Mr. Bryce, "that even the constitutions we call rigid must make their choice between being bent or being broken." We have bent our constitution several times, and just now it is believed by many that there must be much more bending if it is to serve as a supreme standard of justice in the changed conditions of modern commerce and industry. Ethical science may well ask whether it can afford to stand still. It has insisted—long and justly—upon the value of reason. It has hailed—and rightly—the worth of the individual, his happiness, and his rights. But eighteenth-century conceptions of reason and early-nineteenth-century conceptions of the individual and his happiness are not "eternal values." New goods are gaining recognition, new possibilities are given by the growth of scientific method, new claims of democracy challenge old ideas of justice. Ethical theory must rise to meet these new conditions, or be left on one side as scholastic theology was left by the world of the Renaissance.

ZOROASTRIANISM

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The religion whose adherents call themselves "Worshippers of Mazda," the Wise God, and which we commonly name after its founder Zoroastrianism, is in many ways of peculiar interest. It is the only monotheistic religion of Indo-European origin, as Judaism is the one independent Semitic monotheism.[1] Zoroastrianism is, further, eminently an ethical religion, both in its idea of God and of what God requires of men. It presents itself as a revelation of God's will through his prophet. His will is that men, renouncing the false gods, should serve the Wise Lord alone, obey his word, and contend on his side for the defeat of evil and the triumph of all good in nature and society and in the character of the individual. The prophet warns men that the day of the Lord is at hand, an ordeal by fire in which God will separate between those who serve him and those who serve him not, and of the endless blessedness or the unfathomable misery beyond. God has his allies not only among men but among the hosts of spirits; to the hierarchy of good powers corresponds a hierarchy of evil. In the endeavor to clear God of the responsibility for evil, Zoroastrianism recognized a powerful head of the evil spirits, a devil. But it had firm faith in the final triumph of good and the end of all evil. When that day shall come, all the dead will be raised to stand at the bar of God in the grand assize and receive the just recompense of reward. The main features of this es-

[1] The term "monotheism" is often loosely applied to monarchical types of polytheism, in which one god is raised to a sovereign rank among the gods, as well as to the pantheistic speculation which sees in all the gods only names, forms, partial manifestations, of one god; but, inasmuch as in both cases worship continues to be paid to many gods in their own name and right, such religions can only be classed as polytheistic. We may distinguish them as monarchical polytheism or pantheistic polytheism, but to call them monotheism, even qualified by a contradictory epithet such as "latent" or "esoteric," is a misuse of words. It may be added that no religion of these types has ever shown the slightest tendency to develop into *religious* monotheism. With monotheistic philosophies we are not here concerned.

chatology were adopted by the Jews and adapted to the premises of their own religion; through Judaism it passed to Christianity, where it was fused with elements of diverse origin; from Judaism and Christianity, and to some extent directly from later Zoroastrianism, Mohammedanism inherited it. The orthodox beliefs about the hereafter of the world and the individual entertained by the nations of Western Asia, Europe, and America, are thus ultimately derived in no small part from Zoroastrianism; only in the farther East, in India, China, and Japan, does another system prevail.

Zoroastrianism had its origin in a branch of the great Iranian race. It rose to power as the religion of the Medo-Persian empire, and while it spread widely among the subject peoples, particularly in Asia Minor, its strongholds were always the Iranian lands; the Sassanian revival proceeded from Persia. The prophet broke with the religion of his people and combatted it, his utterances are largely shaped by this antagonism; yet doubtless, if we knew more about it, it would be found that his own thought had historical antecedents in the faith of his fathers. When Mazdaism prevailed, it took back much which in its first zeal it had discarded —Iranian gods, forms of worship, and superstitions. It is necessary, therefore, to premise somewhat about the race and its old religion.

The ancestors of the Aryo-Indians and of the Iranians before their migrations lived side by side on the high plateau north of the Hindu Kush. Thence the former made their way into the valleys of Kabul and the Indus and southward to the Panjab, while the latter spread from their old seats westward into Media and Persia. The age of these movements is not certainly known. In the 15th century B.C., rulers of Mitanni, on the upper Euphrates and eastward, bear Iranian names, and names of the same origin appear about the same time in the Amarna despatches among the invaders of Palestine. At Boghaz Keui in Asia Minor, a Hittite capital, the names of Aryan gods, Mitra and Varuna, Indra and Nasatya, have been found in Mitannian documents dating from the beginning of the 14th century. The mass of the population in these countries was, however, plainly not Aryan. Be-

yond this fragmentary evidence of the presence of Aryans in the West in the great upheaval of nations between the 15th century and the 13th, the Iranians first appear on the stage of history in the 9th century, when the Assyrian king Shalmanassar made a campaign in Media (836 B.C.). His successors were frequently at war in the same regions, but evidently with petty princes and rulers of cities, not with a united Median kingdom. Such a kingdom, indeed, can hardly have arisen before the second half of the 7th century.

Though it suffered greatly from the Scythian inroads, it reaped the benefit of the more severe blow which the barbarians inflicted on Assyria, and in 606 Cyaxares took and destroyed Nineveh and made an end of the Assyrian Empire. In the following years he extended his sway over Asia Minor as far as the Halys, and to the east over a large part of the Iranian lands. In 553 the Persian Cyrus, a vassal king reigning at Anshan in Susiana, revolted against his Median overlord, Astyages, and made himself king in his room, the supremacy of the Persians succeeding to that of the Medes. In 546 Sardes fell, and in the next few years Caria, Lycia, and the Greek cities on the coast were subdued; Babylon was taken in 539, and its empire passed to the Persians; Egypt was conquered by Cambyses in 525. Shaken to its foundations by the revolts which followed the death of Cambyses and the usurpation of the Pseudo-Smerdis, the Persian power was re-established more firmly than ever by Darius Hystaspis. It surpassed the empires that preceded it not more in the extent of its dominion than in the strongly centralized organization which gave it a stability none of them had known.

The inscriptions of Darius display him as a zealous worshipper of Ahura Mazda, the "Wise Lord," the supreme god of the Zoroastrian faith, to whom he attributes his victories over enemies and rebels. That similar testimony is not borne by the inscriptions of Cyrus may be explained by their limited extent and different character.

The religion of the early Iranians was closely akin to that of the Vedic Indians. One of the greatest of the Iranian gods is Mithra, the Vedic Mitra; other Indo-Iranian gods are Zoroastrian devils, like Indra and Nasatya (Naonhaithya); the myth

of the dragon-slayer appears among both peoples, as do the first man, Yama (Iranian Yima), first to die and ruler in the realm of the dead, and the conception of the order of the world, natural, ritual, moral (Vedic *Rita*, Avestan *Asha*). The preparation and offering of a drink made from the expressed juice of a plant has the same central place in both religions under the same name, *Soma, Haoma;* the priests who kindle and tend the sacred fire bear the same title, Persian *Athravan*, Indian *Atharvan*. These agreements are all the more conclusive because Zoroastrianism did its best to efface every vestige of Iranian heathenism.

Apart from the changes thus purposely wrought, there are fundamental differences in the temper and spirit of the two religions that must be attributed to other causes, among which climatic environment and the conditions of livelihood were doubtless peculiarly potent. In India, from the Brahmanic period when speculative thinking sets in, the prevailing trend is toward monism, now metaphysical, now pantheistic. Even more universally the world is denied as unreal or renounced as evil through and through. Salvation, the end of all philosophy as well as of religion, is escape from the endless chain of bodily existences upon each of which man enters laden with the deeds of previous lives, a deliverance achieved by overcoming the ignorance or the blind desire which holds man bound on the wheel of rebirth. Abnegation of the world, withdrawal from society, repression of the body, meditation, methodical cultivation of trance-states, are the means by which transcendental knowledge may be attained and desire extirpated in all the orthodoxies and heresies of India. It is not strange that a people who thought so ill of the world should never have played a part in the history of the world, nor have developed a national consciousness in any other form than antipathy to their foreign masters.

For the Iranians, in vastly less favored lands, where man had to wring a meagre living from an unkindly nature, subject to violent extremes of cold and heat, perpetually on his defence against the predatory hordes of the steppes and the desert, life was an unceasing conflict with hostile powers, visible and invisible; watchfulness, courage, energy, were the virtues on which existence depended. In contrast to the metaphysical turn of the

Hindu mind, the Iranian genius was eminently practical; hard reasonableness marks its thinking, adaptability distinguishes its action. The race had not only the qualities needed to conquer an empire but the higher qualities that are required to organize and govern one in a degree matched only by the Romans, whom in other respects also they much resemble. All these traits are reflected in their religion. It, too, is a conflict with innumerable evil powers; but the Iranians do not for that reason despair of the world, for the good is mightier than the evil and shall prevail. Man's salvation is not to flee from the world, but to combat evil wherever he finds it and do a man's part to overcome it. This strenuous and militant type was not first impressed upon the religion by the Zoroastrian reform; it is rather a characteristic of the popular religion which is impressed upon the higher faith.

Zoroastrianism is the result of a prophetic reformation of the old Iranian religion which may be compared in various ways to the work of the Israelite prophets, and its sacred scriptures, containing prophetic utterances, liturgy and ceremonial, hymns, cosmogony, and the like, have many points of resemblance to the Old Testament. The comprehensive name of the scriptures is Avesta. Besides the canonical writings, there are many works of later date and in another language which are of value for the history of the religion in Sassanian and Moslem times.

The Avesta as we have it is only a part of a much larger collection made, according to a credible tradition, under the first Sassanian king (226–240 A.D.), and extant, it seems, even in the 9th century of our era. According to the Parsi tradition this collection consisted of twenty-one books, of which only one, the Vendidad, has been preserved substantially in the original form. The rest of our Avesta is made up of the remains of other books combined and arranged for liturgical purposes, not without some later additions. As now in our hands the Avesta consists of five parts: the Yasna, a liturgy recited by the priests at the offering to all the deities, with the Vispered, a supplement used on certain occasions; the Vendidad, dealing chiefly with the rules of clean and unclean, and with purifications and expiations, all from the point of view indicated by its title, "Antidemonic Law," since the

unclean is the sphere of evil spirits; the Yashts are hymns of various age and poetic merit in honor of particular deities; finally, the Khordah Avesta is a collection of prayers for the private use of the laity as well as the priests. Inserted in the Yana (chapters 28–54) are the Gathas, metrical texts in a different dialect from the rest, the oldest and most sacred part of the Avesta.

Zoroaster has not escaped the fate of other religious founders, including Buddha and Jesus, of being pushed off the earth into the sky; his story, like theirs, was interpreted as but another turn of the kaleidoscopic sun-myth or storm-myth. The life of Zoroaster, as it is written in late books like the Zerdusht Nameh, is completely legendary; some traits of this legend were known even to Greek authors. In the older Avesta, however, and above all in the Gathas, the prophet is an altogether human figure, and no modern Avestan scholar doubts that he was an historical person. The Mazdaean doctrine is plainly not the evolution of a popular religion: it is the work of a thinker and reformer who combats the religion of his people; its gods are his devils and its priests their servants.

It must be confessed that credible tradition has not much to tell us about the prophet. Concerning the age in which he lived there is wide diversity. The Greeks put him 5000 years before the Trojan war or 6000 years before Plato, probably in consequence of some misunderstanding of the Zoroastrian theory of the ages of the world. The Bundahish (9th century A.D.), followed by several Parsi and Moslem authors, offers a seemingly exact date for the beginning of the prophet's ministry, namely 258 years before Alexander the Great, from which, with certain corrections, it has been reckoned that Zoroaster was born in 660 B.C. The Bundahish gives, however, the list of kings on which the 258 years was computed, with the duration of their reigns, beginning with Vishtasp, the patron of Zoroaster, and ending with the last Darius (Codomannus) and Alexander. The succession does not correspond even remotely with the Achaemenian line; it gives two successive reigns of 90 (or, as West corrects the figures, 120) and 112 years respectively. Under these circumstances it is hazardous to assume that the total is a trustworthy tradition,

while the particulars are inexplicable. There remains the fact, already noted, that Darius Hystaspis was a Mazdaean; the religion had therefore taken root in Persia by the 6th century, and it is inferred from the name Mazdaka, twice occurring in Assyrian inscriptions in lists of Median petty kings, that it had adherents in Media in the 8th century.

Tradition, though not with unanimous voice, points to Bactria, in far eastern Iran, as the scene of the first triumphs of the new faith. Vishtasp (Hystaspes),[2] Zoroaster's royal convert and patron, came of a line native in Seistan; with this the horizon of the Gathas seems to agree. About Zoroaster's birthplace there is no agreement; the vicinity of Lake Urmia in Aderbeijan (Atropatene) and Rai (Raghae) in north-eastern Media are rival claimants, while some Greek authors made him a Bactrian. Several modern scholars harmonize the traditions by the hypothesis that he was a native of Media, who being, like other prophets, without honor in his own country, migrated to Bactria and there found better success. However that may be, it seems probable that the doctrine spread westward into Media and Persia from eastern Iran.

From the Gathas we learn that much of the success of the new faith was due to the support of Vishtasp, who seems in some passages to have stood model for a portrait of the good king. Zoroaster had other allies in high places in the wise counsellor Jamaspa and his brother Frashaoshtra; he married Hvovi, a daughter of the latter, and gave his own daughter by another marriage to the former. One of the first believers was his cousin, Maidyoi-maonha, and others of his family are known by name. A Turanian convert, Fryana, receives a high encomium from the prophet for his piety and generosity. The progress of the new faith was doubtless slow, and when it began to overcome indifference it was confronted by opposition. There were moments when the prophet himself could not repress his questionings: "Tell me truly, O Lord, who is the true believer and who the misbeliever? Art thou the wrong-doer, or is it the misbeliever who robs me of my blessings? How is it that he is not recognized

[2] It is perhaps not superfluous to remark that this Hystaspes is not the father of Darius.

as the evil-doer?" "To what land shall I flee, whither betake myself in flight? They put discord between me and my family and patrons. They who exalt the misbeliever make my life in vain, because they keep the householders and their wives from possessing the (heavenly) inheritance, those, O Wise One, who turn away believers from the Good Mind." His most persistent opponents, as might be supposed, were the priests of the old religion.

The allusions in the Gathas are from their nature obscure, but they have all the marks of historical verity. In the later Avesta the legend begins. The Vendidad tells of Zoroaster's temptation, at the instance of Ahriman, by the false demon Buiti [3] and "insidious perdition," that is, unbelief. His miraculous birth and the miracles he wrought were narrated in lost books of the Avesta, and are retold with further embellishments in mediaeval writings; the wars between the believing king Vishtasp and the Turanian Arjasp are wars of religion, and fill a large space in legend and in the Persian epic. According to these sources, Zoroaster died at the age of seventy-seven, murdered, some say, by a heathen priest and sorcerer; slain with the priests in the fire temple by Arjasp's Turanians at the storming of Balkh, as the Shah Nameh narrates it.

In the Gathas, Zoroaster declares that Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord, has revealed to him the word which he proclaims to men, and he tells at length of his calling to this ministry. It is his mission to teach men to obey Ahura Mazda and strive after the Right (Asha), through which they shall obtain the good things of this world and the other; no other man thus teaches the law of the Lord. His message is a way of salvation from destruction revealed by Ahura Mazda, who knows. He sets before men life and death, and every one must choose between them; even a Turanian who obeys the truth can be saved. In the day of the great affair, each will receive the reward of the teaching he has followed. The truth may now be hard to discern from falsehood, but one day Ahura Mazda will establish the faith by visible proof.

The fundamental conception of the Gathas is the irreconcilable

[3] The demon of idolatry.

antagonism of the principles of good and evil, truth and falsehood, knowledge and ignorance—two primal spirits, of whom, according to their own declaration, the one is good, the other evil, in thought and word and deed. Between them the upright have made the right choice; not so the wicked. "I will proclaim the two primal spirits at the beginning of the world, of which the good spirit said to the evil, Neither our thoughts nor our teachings, our understandings, our creeds, our words and our deeds, neither our consciences nor our souls are in accord!" The demons (*daevas*, primarily the gods of the popular religion) chose not rightly between these two spirits, but were deceived into choosing the evil mind, and all ran to Aeshma, through whom they seek to poison the lives of men. They are all the brood of the evil mind; they deceive men, and so deprive them of their good in this life and of immortality beyond. The comprehensive name for evil is Druj, "the Lie," which is sometimes personified. Hell is the world of the Lie.

God is Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord, often called only Mazda, the All-wise, or Ahura, Lord. He is the creator of the world and all things therein. "It was by thy thought that in the beginning, O Mazda, thou didst form us and the world and religion and the (spiritual) intelligences; that thou didst put life into the body, that thou didst create good works and true doctrine, and that thou dost inspire the desire of those who strive after them." The Lord knows all that men do, his eyes behold their secret deeds as well as those done in open day, he knows all that is and is to be. He requites men according to their deeds in this world and the other. No other gods are named in the Gathas. The polemic is aimed at the Daevas (false gods) in general, and against their priests as representatives of false religion.

What the true religion demands of men is that they should decide for Ahura Mazda, choosing the way of truth and goodness. Man must give himself to Asha, Vohu Mano, and Ahura Mazda; he must follow the Lord, be like him, and teach others to be like him; and must labor for the renewal of the world; one of the most effective means to this end is the faithful teaching of the true religion. The teaching of the evil (the old religion) is to be scrupulously shunned.

The ruling principle in dealing with fellow-men is to do good to the good and harm to the evil, for the evil are the foes of the Lord and his good world, the allies of the evil spirit and the Daevas; to do good to them would therefore be treasonably to give aid and comfort to the enemy in the great conflict. The evil are, first of all, those who reject the true religion and its distinctive morals and customs. Gifts to the bad are a sin; but to support the poor who live in holiness and good thought is a virtue. The same rule extends to the brute creation. The useful animals, especially cattle and dogs, are to be kindly treated, well-fed and cared for; cruelty and neglect are grave sins, wanton killing of cattle—under which head the animal sacrifices of the Daeva-worshippers fall—a crime. On the other hand, we shall see that the destruction of beasts of prey and noxious vermin is in later books a highly meritorious work.

So also the tilling of soil, the reclamation of waste land by rooting out weeds and thorns and extending irrigation to make grain and fruits grow, is a part of practical religion; it is in fact the conquest of a piece of the enemy's country for the Lord. No religion has set so high a value on agricultural labor as the service of God. The enemies of the Lord are the predatory Turanians who raid the settlements and carry off the husbandman's cattle; believers are bound not to harry Mazdaean villages. The conflict of religions is a struggle of agricultural civilization against nomadic barbarism, a situation which throws an instructive light on the beginnings of Zoroastrianism. From the first, Mazdaism was thus directly a civilizing force.

The Gathas give other glimpses of the conditions of the time. The prophet denounces unjust judges, the corrupt rulers who for gain put power into the hands of the wicked, the tyrannical and oppressive princes, and those who oppose the true religion —for a misbeliever cannot be a good king—the false teachers, deniers, and deceivers. He paints with affection the character of the good prince. The good king is he who practises the good in thought and word and deed, according to the teaching of the wise, "He, O Ahura, is the being who best embodies thee." He is generous, and nourishes the virtuous poor. Blessed of Ahura, above all, is the prince who adopts the Mazdaean faith and makes

it prevail. Like the Israelite prophets with their ideal king of the golden age to come, or like Plato with his royal philosopher, Zoroaster sets his hope of the triumph of the true religion on a good sovereign.

Zoroaster believed that God would vindicate the truth of his message in the great judgment which was near at hand. The deaf and the blind who will not be converted will be destroyed, the righteous are borne by two angels to the abode of Vohu Mano. "The sinners do not know the signal punishment that they are drawing upon them by their teachings, the punishment of the molten metal,[4] but thou, O Ahura Mazda, knowest their evil deeds." In the other life long torture awaits the wicked. "For him who has tried to deceive the upright there will hereafter be groans, a long abode in darkness, foul food, and insulting words. This is the world, O ye wicked, to which your works and your religion are taking you." The dead must pass the trial at the judgment bridge: the good cross it without difficulty, the wicked fall into the abyss, to dwell forever in the world of the Lie, while for the righteous splendid rewards are in store. There is mention also of those in whom good and evil are evenly balanced, who in the later eschatology inhabit a kind of limbo. Whether the resurrection of the dead is alluded to in the Gathas is disputable; at least, it is not the prominent feature of the doctrine that it became when the judgment receded to a distant age.

The Gathas cannot be thought to contain anything like the full presentation of Zoroaster's teaching; in them he speaks, for example, in a standing phrase of good thoughts, words, deeds, but seldom defines what is good. The observances of religion, prayer, adoration, offering, are referred to, but nowhere prescribed. The sacred fire is a gift of Ahura Mazda; the Lord himself appeared to the prophet when he made the sacred offering on Ahura's fire; but of the Haoma offering, which has so large a place in the Persian worship, there is no mention. Zoroaster speaks as a prophet, not as a law-giver or a liturgist. A comparison of the Gathas with the rest of the Yasna, in which they are imbedded, makes this all the clearer.

[4] A kind of ordeal by fire.

The character of the religion is well illustrated by the old Zoroastrian confession of faith (Yasna 12):

I repudiate the Daevas. I confess myself a worshipper of Mazda, a Zarathushtrian, as an enemy of the Daevas, a prophet of the Lord, praising and worshipping the Immortal Holy Ones (Amesha Spentas). To the Wise Lord I promise all good; to him, the good, beneficent, righteous, glorious, venerable, I vow all the best; to him from whom is the cow, the law, the (celestial) luminaries, with whose luminaries (heavenly) blessedness is conjoined. I choose the holy, good Armaiti (Humble Devotion), she shall be mine. I abjure theft and cattle-stealing, plundering and devastating the villages of Mazda worshippers.

It is my duty to grant to the inmates of the house freedom of movement and residence,[5] and to the cattle with which they live on earth. With due reverence I vow this to Asha (Righteousness) by the consecrated water: I will henceforth nor plunder nor lay waste the villages of Mazda-worshippers, nor assail their persons and lives. I renounce fellowship with the wicked, lawless, evil-doing Daevas, the most deceitful, corrupt, and wicked of all, and with adherents of the Daevas, with sorcerers and those who follow them, with every bad man, whoever he may be, in thoughts and words and deeds and deportment, as I hereby renounce fellowship with the mischievous heretic.

As the Wise Lord, in all his communings with Zarathushtra instructed him, as he in all his communings with the Wise Lord renounced fellowship with the Daevas, so I also, as a worshipper of the Lord and follower of Zarathushtra, renounce the fellowship of the Daevas, as Zarathushtra, the representative of the true faith, renounced them.

Of the faith of the waters, the plants, the useful cow, the faith of the Wise Lord who created the cow and the upright man, the faith of Zarathushtra, of King Vishtaspa, of Frashaoshtra and Jamaspa, the faith of all the messengers of salvation and their helpers, and of every right believer—in this faith and in this promise I am a worshipper of Mazda. I confess myself a Mazda-worshipper, a Zarathushtrian, by vow and confession. I promise well-thought thought, well-spoken word, well-done deed. I pledge myself to the religion of the Mazda-worshippers, which makes an end of strife and lays down weapons and promotes kindred marriage, which is the highest, best, most beautiful of those that are or shall be, the religion of faith in Ahura, the religion of Zarathushtra. To the Wise Lord I promise all good. This is the profession of the Mazdaean religion.

[5] Abolition of slavery?

The antecedents of this teaching are unknown. The title Ahura, which becomes in Mazdaism the name of the Supreme God, is the same word as Asura, which in the Vedas is the name of a group, or class, of deities among whom Varuna and Mitra are the foremost. Of all the Vedic gods, Varuna is the one whose sharacter most nearly approaches that of Ahura Mazda, so that come scholars have been led to think that the latter is really a development of Varuna. Ahura (or the good spirit which is identified with Ahura) is clad with the solid firmament as with a vestment,[6] as becomes a god of heaven. The Iranian Mithra, ignored in the Gathas, could not be kept in the background, and in the religion of later times became the first of the gods. He is closely assimilated in character to Ahura, being, as a god of light, the god of truth and good faith. The Daevas are the gods of the popular religion and of the tribes who did not embrace the Zoroastrian reform. The word is in India the prevailing name for the gods (*deva*), while there *asura* came in later times to be applied to demons. Among the arch-devils of the later Avesta are Indra, Sauru, and Naonhaithya, the Indian Indra, Çarva (Rudra), and Nasatya (a title of the Açvins). It is a tempting conjecture that the ancestors of the Iranian tribes among which Mazdaism arose were more intimately connected with the Aryo-Indian tribes whose greatest god was Varuna than with the Indra-worshippers who in the invasion and conquest gained for themselves and their gods the leading place; but the theory of Haug that a religious conflict between the Mazda-worshippers and those who adhered to the old nature religion preceded the separation of the two branches of the race and was one of its causes is not tenable, and even the modified form which Geldner has given it does not wholly commend itself.

At most, these relations only reveal the background of the Mazdaism, not the origin of the religion itself. That the latter is not the evolution of a natural polytheism is obvious, as has already been observed. The teaching of the Gathas is, as distinctly as that of the Upanishads, the outcome of reflection; much more distinctly it bears the stamp of an individual thinker. It may very well be that the problems which engaged Zoroaster

[6] Yasna 30 5.

were not raised by him for the first time, but, however many others may have thought about these questions, he thought them through.

The monotheism of the Gathas is much more advanced than that of the loftiest Vedic hymns to Varuna; Ahura Mazda has no partner nor rival. The existence of the beings whom the people worship as gods is not denied, but they are false gods, demons, who, deceived, made choice of the evil spirit as their lord, and in turn delude men into following them. A similar conception is common in Judaism, and is expressed by Paul, "The sacrifices which the heathen offer, they offer to demons and not to gods." [7]

Zoroaster sees everywhere in the moral world good and evil arrayed over against each other: there are men whose head and heart are right, who strive to be good and do good, and there are others whose aims and conduct are just the opposite, and so it has always been. This difference is not accidental, every man has the character he has chosen. The types of these contrasted characters are two primal spirits, antagonists from the beginning of history, the good, or beneficent, spirit, or, as it might not improperly be rendered, the Holy Spirit, and the evil, or baleful, spirit. The good spirit sometimes seems to be Ahura Mazda himself, as the spirit in the Old Testament is sometimes distinct from Jahveh, sometimes identified with him; the evil spirit, the evil mind, is akin to the demon, Lie. The principles of good and evil are thus personalized, but the evil spirit is a much less concrete and dramatic figure than the Ahriman of later writings, who is not only a deceiver, but creator and ruler of the bad half of the world. The question of the origin of moral evil is followed back to the "primal" evil spirit; where he came from is left as a problem for later centuries. Whatever may be true of later developments of Zoroastrianism, the Gathas are not dualistic otherwise than as any system that tries to absolve God of the responsibility for moral evil is dualistic.

By the side of Ahura Mazda, ministers who do his will, are the "Immortal Beneficent Ones," the Amesha Spentas,[8] Vohu Mano,

[7] 1 Cor. 10 20.

[8] The name is not found in the Gathas themselves, but occurs in a prose text of approximately the same age.

"Good Mind" (intelligence, purpose, disposition), Asha, Right (as conformity to the moral order), Kshatra, Sovereignty (the Kingdom of God), Armaiti, Devotion (humble piety), Hauvartat and Ameretat, Welfare and Immortality; with these six the genius of obedience, Sraosha, is sometimes joined. These are attributes of God, ideals of human character in the likeness of God, and spiritual blessings which God bestows on those who strive after them in the way of his appointment; they are not abstract ideas, but personified qualities, or spirits and genii of qualities. Among them Vohu Mano and Asha naturally hold the highest place. Here also penetrating and constructive thought is apparent. Asha (Arta, in Persian proper names; Vedic Rita), "Order" is indeed an Aryan conception and name, which in the Vedas sometimes appears as the will or law of Varuna, sometimes as an independent principle; but in the Gathas it is raised to a higher ethical plane as the law of righteousness in every relation. The other figures and the part they play are characteristically Mazdaean; they are as little a popular creation as the Atman of the Upanishads.

The religion of the Gathas is an ethical religion, not as that term may be applied to the higher nature religions of civilized peoples—the Greeks, for example—which make the gods the guardians of customary law or vindicators of an ideal righteousness, but in the sense that the nature and will of God are wholly moral. The human virtues are the divine attributes—the fact tells more than the direct moral injunctions of the Ahura Mazda. This explains the silence of the Gathas about worship. It is only by allusions that we learn that the cult of the sacred fire, the element of light and purity, belonged to primitive Mazdaism as it did to the older Aryan religion and to later Zoroastrianism. In all this we are reminded again of the ethical monotheism of the Hebrew prophets. There is, however, one noteworthy difference. In Israel ethical philosophy moves within the limits of a national religion: it is the national god who becomes in the hands of the prophets a righteous god, and consequently, down to the fall of the nation, the religious subject is the people, the retribution is national and historical. Zoroastrianism addressed itself in the beginning to individuals, bidding every man choose

between truth and falsehood, good and evil; the retribution is individual, not collective, whether it be on the day of the great affair or after death. By converting kings and people, it became the national religion of the Iranian people and the Achaemenian kings.

God's righteous rule involves the idea of retribution. He rewards faith and good works in this life, but on the other hand the good may be harried and persecuted by the bad. Zoroaster's mind is on the imminent crisis, when by the ordeal of molten metal God shall discern between the righteous and the wicked, between believers and unbelievers, or on the separation at the judgment bridge. This bridge, of which Zoroaster speaks as though it was a familiar notion, may have been a piece of popular eschatology—it has an interesting parallel among some North American Indians—and the glimpses of heaven and hell have nothing distinctive about them, but the standard is new in its moral rigorousness, and, above all, in that a man's religious confession is a decisive factor.

The conception of revelation, also, is characteristic. The Vedic Rishis were inspired poets, the gods put in their mouths the hymns they sang to the god's honor at the sacrifices; but Zoroaster's revelation is prophetic: what comes to him is not how the gods elect to be praised or worshipped, but what God will have man believe and how he will have him live. What Ahura Mazda thus makes known to him the prophet proclaims to his fellowmen.

Nothing is known of the way in which Zoroastrianism spread through the Iranian lands. We may surmise that the efforts of its adherents were directed, like the prophet's own, to the conversion of princes who should support the good religion and cause it to prevail over the Daevas and their worshippers. Like every other religion which is conceived as the only true and saving faith—like Christianity and Mohammedanism, for example—Mazdaism is in principle intolerant; in the Gathas believers are exhorted to chastise the misbelievers with the sword, and it is not improbable that forcible suppression of heathen worship at home and wars with heathen neighbors were from the beginning effective means of establishing the kingdom of God and expand-

ing its dominion—so much of truth there may be in the legends of the wars of the faith, however little of historical fact they may embody. How generally Zoroastrianism was the religion of the Iranian peoples before the rise of the Persian Empire, there is no means of determining; only about Media have we testimony that it was the dominant, if not the exclusive, religion of the country, whose priests, the Magi, were a powerful hereditary class.

In becoming the religion of rulers and people, Zoroastrianism took up again many features of the older religion which the founder had rejected or ignored, and its distinctive teachings were reshaped in forms more easily apprehended by the vulgar mind. Darius in his inscriptions names no god but Ahuramazda, though he speaks generally of the clan-gods, or genii of the clans —a conception not alien to the fundamental ideas of Mazdaism— and of "the other deities." Artaxerxes Mnemon (404–362 B.C.), however, names Mithra and Anahita by the side of Ahuramazda, and Berossus reports that this king first set up images of the goddess Anahita not only in his capitals, Babylon, Susa, Ecbatana, but at Damascus and Sardes, from which it may be inferred that he was especially devoted to her worship. Darius Ochus prays, "May Ahuramazda and Mithra protect me and this land." That the inscriptions make no mention of the evil principle is not evidence of unorthodoxy; [9] the inscriptions of Christian kings, it has been pertinently remarked, do not abound in references to the devil, however sincerely their authors may have believed that he was the instigator of rebellion.

The Achaemenian kings were buried in tombs, a mode of disposing of the dead abhorrent to the sacred law of the Vendidad, but seemingly not condemned in the Gathas. Herodotus affirms of his own observation that the exposure of the dead was practised by the Magi, but adds, "the Persians envelop the body in wax and bury it in the earth," and Strabo makes the same distinction: the Magians alone leave the bodies to the birds of prey. The exposure of the dead on raised platforms is not infrequent among wandering tribes,[10] and has of itself nothing to do with a

[9] In the inscriptions of Darius Hystaspis, the Druj (Lie) appears, as in the Gathas, to be the comprehensive word for evil.

[10] Examples are found in America as well as among the Mongols.

fear of polluting the earth, which might seem to be equally well attained by coating the body in wax. We can only infer that the former was no prescription of primitive Zoroastrianism, but a custom of a particular region or tribe which in Sassanian times succeeded in being made law.

In the Indian Vedas Mitra is the constant comrade of Varuna, so closely associated with him, indeed, that there are hardly any hymns to Mitra alone. It is possible that the worship of this god was more prominent among the western Iranians than in either India or in Bactria.[11] In character he is much like Ahura Mazda, but, as becomes a god of the old mythology, he is a more heroic figure. A champion of truth and right, a god who gives victory to the good cause, it is not strange that as a popular god he outshone his theological superior. His worship spread widely in the subject lands, especially in Armenia and Cappadocia, and he appeared to many Greek observers to be the chief god of the Persians. Anahita Ardvisura was a goddess of the waters, especially of the fructifying waters of heaven which pour down into the mythical lake Vourukasha and are thence distributed to the seven regions of the earth. She supplies the unfailing sources which revive vegetation and the herds; she creates in men and women the powers of reproduction, gives mothers easy childbirth and abundant milk. In the hymn to her praise (Yasht 5) the goddess is described as a fair and buxom maiden in rich attire, with a golden crown, perhaps as she was represented in art. As a goddess of fertility, she resembled a whole class of West Asiatic goddesses, and was in many places assimilated to them or identified with them, sometimes borrowing features of their cults—in Armenia, for example, religious prostitution—but there is no sufficient ground for the opinion that the goddess herself was borrowed from the Semites.[12] A male counterpart of Anahita Ardvisura is Apam-Napat, the Water Child, an old Aryan deity of frequent occurrence in the Veda.

[11] A Mithradates is named among the assassins of Xerxes.

[12] The Babylonian Anat, whose name has a superficial resemblance to Anahita, is never so much as named in Assyrian or New-Babylonian texts, that is, in the period in which the Persians might have heard of her, and apparently even in earlier times had a place in the pantheon only because it was proper for Anu to have a wife. The West Syrian Anath, a warlike deity, also disappears from view long before the Persian time.

The religion of the Persians seemed to Greek observers a pure nature worship. They had no temples or images—as Herodotus opines, because they did not, like the Greeks, conceive the gods to be of the same nature as men. They offer sacrifice, he tells us, on mountain tops to Zeus, by which name is to be understood the whole circle of heaven; they sacrifice also to the sun and the moon and the earth, to fire and water and the winds. The Avesta contains hymns to the Sun and the Moon and to the star Sirius (Tishtrya); of the divine fire and the sacredness of water and air there will be more to say in another connection.

By the side of these nature powers the Immortal Beneficent Ones become personal deities and receive divine worship. In Strabo's time Vohu Mano (Ὦμανος) had fire temples in Cappadocia, and images that were carried in procession. Ahura Mazda is the father and creator of them all; he brought them into being that they might be his ministers, and what he does in the world is mainly done through their instrumentality. Each of them presides over a province of nature: Vohu Mano over the useful animals, Asha Vahishta over fire, Khshatra Vairya over the metals, Spenta Armaiti is the goddess of earth; Haurvatat and Ameretat are the genii of waters and plants respectively. In the ecclesiastical calendar of later times each of these Amshaspands is regent of a certain month of the year and of a certain day of the month. All these divinities (Yazatas, modern Persian Izeds) are subordinate to Ahura Mazda; the theology is so far forth consistently monotheistic. But they receive individually and collectively the same kind of worship as the supreme God, and from the practical side the religion may be described as a monarchical polytheism with a somewhat numerous and varied pantheon.

The great Yashts betray a consciousness of the inconsistency, or perhaps we should say the innovation, by making Ahura Mazda himself commend or prescribe the worship of the other divinities. The Mithra hymn begins: "Ahura Mazda said to Spitama Zarathushtra, When I created Mithra with wide pastures, I created him, O Spitama, as worthy of sacrifice and worship as I, Ahura Mazda, myself am." The hymn to Anahita opens similarly:[13] "Ahura Mazda said to Spitama Zarathushtra,

[13] Cf. also Tishtrya Yasht, 52.

Worship, O Spitama Zarathushtra, my Ardvi, rich in blessings, pure, copious, wholesome, foe of demons, believing in Ahura, to whom the bodily world owes sacrifice and praise." To Anahita Ahura Mazda himself first made the Haoma offering, and prayed that Zarathushtra might accept his religion, which prayer she granted. Yet she also is produced by the word of Ahura Mazda.

The ethical dualism, if it may be so called, hardened in time into a theological dualism, in which an evil being of supernatural power stands over against Ahura Mazda. Aristotle and Hermippus had heard that according to the Magi there are two principles, a good divinity (*δαίμων*) and an evil divinity, the former called Zeus, or Oromasdes, the latter Hades, or Areimanios. To Ahriman the later Zoroastrian writings attribute the creation of all evil things, and he has his ministers, with the Evil Mind as Grand Vizier, each standing over against one of the Beneficent Ones. The eschatology also underwent a change. The great crisis which the prophet expected in his time did not come, and to later generations it did not seem imminent. The result was that the judgment of the individual at death became a separate act. The general judgment of Zoroaster's original conception was postponed to the end of the age, and to appear at that final assize the dead of all generations were brought to life again in the resurrection. This doctrine also was known to the Greeks before Alexander: Theopompus reports that the Magi teach that men will come to life again and be immortal in a spiritual state in which they neither need food nor cast a shadow.

The Macedonian conquest signified much more than the overthrow of the Persian empire; it was the invasion of the East by western civilization. Greek colonies were founded wherever the armies penetrated, and many of them became flourishing cities, and centres of more or less exotic Greek culture. The division of Alexander's empire left the greater part of its territory under Macedonian or Greek rule. A Greek Bactrian kingdom which arose about the middle of the third century comprised the old East Iranian lands and reached into India; on the west it bordered on the Seleucid empire. Parthia, however, under the native Arsacidan dynasty, succeeded a little later in conquering

its independence (247 B.C.), and Mithradates (174–136 B.C.) united in his kingdom a great part of the Iranian lands, while the Greek Bactrian kingdom went down (139 B.C.) under an invasion of nomad tribes from the great Scythian steppes. From the middle of the first century B.C., the Arsacidans were repeatedly involved in wars with Rome. Trajan cherished the ambition of reclaiming for western civilization the empire of Alexander, but by the destruction of Seleucia in 164 A.D. the Romans themselves dealt a blow to Greek influence in the East which the Parthians had been unable to inflict. Meanwhile the Parthian kings, who in earlier times had proudly put "Philhellene" on their coins, showed themselves more and more averse to foreign culture; a national, or perhaps we should rather say an Oriental, reaction set in in the first century of our era, the knowledge of Greek declined, and from the beginning of the third century western learning was accessible only in Aramaic translations.

The history of the religion during these centuries is very obscure. It is probable that it suffered in the beginning from the withdrawal of the state support it had enjoyed under the Achaemenians, and in the period of "acute Hellenization," which apparently lasted for some generations, the would-be cultivated classes may have been as indifferent Zoroastrians as the upper classes in Jerusalem were indifferent Jews. The Parthian kings do not seem to have been distinguished for religious zeal, and the perpetual internal disorders of the kingdom and frequent changes of the ruling family were unfavorable conditions. The reaction of which we have spoken may have had its religious side; mediaeval Persian tradition which there is no reason for discrediting records that a king Valkash caused all that could be recovered of the Avesta from manuscripts and the memory of men to be collected and copied. It is uncertain whether Vologeses I (contemporary of Nero) or the third of the name (148–191 A.D.) is meant.

In Persia proper several series of coins show that native lines ruled over smaller or larger regions as vassals of Greek or Parthian kings or virtually their own masters. Early in the third century one of the Persian petty kings, who bore the historic name Artaxerxes (Ardashir I, acceded 212 A.D.), subdued the other

kinglets in the vicinity of Persepolis (Istakhr), and, when called to account by his Parthian overlord, beat him in a series of battles, the Persian Sassanian rule succeeding the Parthian much as seven centuries and a half before the Persian Achaemenian succeeded the Mede. The vassal states were subdued and incorporated in the kingdom, and Ardashir assumed the title, King of Kings of the Iranians. In Persia, on one side of the turbulent main current of history, Zoroastrianism had been preserved in greater purity than in regions where it was in contact with other religions, and it had evidently a stronger hold on both rulers and people. The rise of the Sassanian kingdom was both a national Persian restoration and a revival of the religion of the glorious Achaemenian times as a national religion. Ardashir includes "Mazdayasnian" (Mazda-worshipper) among his royal titles; at his order the priest Tansar prepared an authoritative canon and text of the Avestan scriptures. What we possess is, as has been already remarked, the remains of this Sassanian Avesta.

It is characteristic of the early Sassanian kings that Ardashir and Shapur I, during their occupation of Armenia, destroyed the images even of the Iranian gods and turned the temples into fire shrines, and there is a remarkable statement that Ardashir wished to suppress the venerable sacred fires in other centres, leaving only that in the capital—a singular parallel, if it be historical, to Josiah's reformation in Jerusalem. The inherent intolerance of Zoroastrian orthodoxy appeared in another way when Christianity, with its exclusive claims and its active propaganda, began to push into Sassanian territory. Political considerations also had a good deal to do with the treatment of Christians, especially after the Roman empire became Christian. Severe persecutions of the Christians occurred repeatedly; strict laws were made against heresy, and apostasy from the Zoroastrian faith was punished with death. The priesthood was an organized and powerful body, whose head had his seat at Rai in Media and was the first person in the state after the king.

The hundred years of wars between Rome and Persia, which began in 527 and was waged with great energy by Chosroes II (Parvez, 590–628), weakened both the decadent empires. The

Arabs wrested Syria from the Romans in 636 and Egypt in 639. By the battle of Kadesiya in 637 and that of Nehavend a few years later, the Persian empire passed into the hands of the Moslems. In a short time the armies of the Caliphs had subdued even the remotest East Iranian lands. Of the decline of Mazdaism under Mohammedan rule little is known. Doubtless many Zoroastrians embraced Islam, as multitudes of Christians did, to escape the disabilities or the oppressions to which they were subject. But systematic efforts to force them to change their religion were not made by the early Caliphs, the Zoroastrians being reckoned with Jews and Christians as "people who have scriptures," and therefore, according to the Koran, to be left undisturbed on condition of paying a head tax; only later were the Zoroastrians excluded from this protection. The extensive literary activity of the Parsi priests in original works as well as in Pahlavi translations and synopses of Avestan books, which lasted at least through the 9th century, shows that the religion still possessed some vitality, and even after that time less significant works were written in modern Persian. The number of Zoroastrians in Persia, however, steadily declined, especially, it may be surmised, after the more fanatical and intolerant Shiites came into power. Two hundred years ago they were estimated at 100,000; to-day they can count less than 10,000 souls, chiefly in Yezd and Kerman.

In the early centuries of Islam, Persian Zoroastrians established themselves in India; the descendants of these emigrants, now numbering about 90,000, principally in the Bombay Presidency, are very prosperous. They have always adhered pretty faithfully to the practice of their law, but in the decadence of the religion in Persia, on whose authorities they were dependent in matters of learning, the Indian community also suffered. Their sacred scriptures, which they could only read in translations twice or thrice removed from the original, became with every generation less understood. The interest of European scholars in these scriptures awakened that of the Parsis themselves, and in the last half century a revival of learning, and a revival of religion by a return to its sources, have been in progress among them.

In the foregoing pages the endeavor has been made to outline the fundamental ideas of Zoroastrianism as they are set forth in the Gathas and to indicate, so far as the sources permit, the directions of subsequent development. It remains to describe the religion as it appears in the Sassanian Avesta and in later Pahlavi writings. This more complete survey will show that, through all its development and the manifold vicissitudes of its fortunes, Zoroastrianism has preserved its original character substantially unchanged.

Ahura Mazda is the supreme God; he is "the creator, Ahura Mazda, resplendent and glorious, the greatest, best, most beautiful of beings, the most constant, wisest, most perfect of form, supreme in righteousness, knowing to do good, giving joy at his good pleasure; who created us, formed us, and sustains us; who is the most beneficent spirit" (Yasna, 1). He is the "omniscient Lord, the most beneficent spirit, the creator of the material worlds, the righteous one" (Vendidad, 2 1). There are representations of Ahura Mazda in relief from both the Achaemenian and Sassanian times, as God the Father is represented without scruple in Christian art, but there were no images in his worship.

Ahura Mazda is absolutely good, and therefore cannot be the author of any kind of evil, natural or moral. All the evil in the world is the work of a power hostile to God and his good creation. The Persians preferred to admit, for the present order of things, a limitation of God's power, rather than to leave room for doubt of his perfect goodness. The first chapter of the Vendidad tells how Ahura Mazda created in order the several Iranian countries with their various excellences, and how for each Angra Mainyu created corresponding plagues—the killing cold of winter, intemperate heat; serpents, locusts, ants; rapine and lust, foreign oppression; unnatural vice, magic and witchcraft, the interment of the dead, and the eating of carrion; pride, doubt, disbelief. Evil spirits and demons, men of devilish character—who are, in fact, demons on earth as well as after death—beasts of prey and noxious vermin, all belong to Angra Mainyu, and the 99,999 diseases the flesh is heir to are his invention. The first of Ahura Mazda's creations was Vohu Mano, "Good Mind" (both good

intelligence and good moral sense), in consultation with whom he produced all his other creatures, just as in Proverbs 8 Wisdom is the first creation of Jahveh, and stood beside him as master-builder when God established the heavens and the earth.[14]

In Philo the Logos commonly takes the place of Wisdom, and the language which is used about the Logos is sometimes strikingly similar to what is said of Vohu Mano in the Avesta. Darmesteter was led by this resemblance, among other things, to think that the Gathas (which he regarded, not as the oldest part of the Avesta, but as comparatively recent) were directly influenced by Jewish Alexandrian philosophy. The conception in the Avesta, however, is vastly simpler than in Philo. Ahura Mazda is no transcendental Absolute, but a living God, and his Good Mind is not a metaphysical link between unchanging Being and the manifold and changing world of becoming, but a hypostasis of the intelligence and goodness with which God created the world. Vohu Mano is in this world the special guardian of the faithful; Good Mind is in a way embodied in them, so that when one of them has contracted uncleanness and is purified by the peculiar disinfectants prescribed in the "antidemonic law," it is said that the Vohu Mano (i.e. the man) is purified. He is also, as has already been noted, the guardian of the flocks and herds, with which the religion is hardly less concerned than with human beings. He receives the righteous at the gates of Paradise; and the significant name of the state of the blest is "the blessings of the Good Mind," as hell is the abode of the Evil (or the worst) Mind.

The Bundahish (9th cent. A.D.) describes the creation of the world, doubtless following substantially the lost Avestan books. The first of Ahura Mazda's "mundane creatures" was the sky, from which Vohu Mano produced the cosmic light and the good religion of the Mazdaeans—true religion was pre-existent, like the Torah in Judaism. Then followed the Amesha Spentas, Asha and the rest. "Of Ahura Mazda's creatures the first was the sky, the second water, the third dry land, the fourth plants, the fifth animals, the sixth mankind." The work of creation filled just a year (365 days), and the six acts correspond to the

[14] With these verses in Prov. 8 cf. especially Gatha 1.

six divisions of the year each ending with a festival of the religious calendar. The similarity of this scheme to the six days of creation in Genesis was early remarked, and some have thought it probable that the Persian cosmology was borrowed from the Jews. There is no external difficulty in such a supposition, for even the lost Avestan book on which the Bundahish depends was probably not as old as Genesis. On the other hand, the number and order of the creative acts are perfectly natural, we might almost say, inevitable: sky, sea, land; plants, animals, man. In fact the several acts of creation fit into the six days of Genesis so awkwardly that many Old Testament critics regard the latter as superimposed on the original cosmologic scheme. Aside from this, one great difference remains: in Genesis the sun and moon and other celestial luminaries are introduced after the plants, as the first of the animal creation, a point of view in itself quite in accord with ancient notions, but perhaps inspired here by Jewish antipathy to the worship of the heavenly bodies. In view of these facts the conjecture that the Persian Genesis is dependent on the Hebrew scriptures is superfluous.[15]

The Bundahish tells much in detail about the creation of the luminaries and the constellations; the different regions of the earth, with their mountains, rivers, and lakes; the families and species of animals, real and fabulous; the origin of mankind, and the races of men distributed over the earth. The three great races are called Airya, Tura, and Sairya (the Aryan Iranians, their hereditary Turanian foes, and the Greeks).[16]

If God made mankind, the question must arise, How comes it then that there are wicked men? The answer of the Bundahish is that in the minds of the first pair an evil thought arose, namely, that it was the evil spirit that had created the water, earth, plants, and animals; from this they went on to sins of act, until at last they became worshippers of the Daevas, just as in the Gathas we read that the Daevas themselves chose not rightly between the two primal spirits, but were deluded into choosing

[15] The contrary theory, that the Jewish cosmology was derived from the Persians, is, on chronological grounds, not worth considering.

[16] Cf. Dinkart, viii, 13, 9, from the lost Citradat Nask. Here, again, the three groups in Genesis, Shem, Ham (Canaan), and Japhet will suggest themselves, or the three Greek stocks, Aeolians, Ionians, Dorians.

the evil mind. Reflection has gone a step farther, to the question how God could have permitted this. According to the Bundahish, Ahura Mazda bids the guardian genii of men (*fravashis*) say whether is better, that men should contend on earth against the fiend and overcome at last, the fiend perishing, or should always be protected against the destroyer. Christian theologians have reasoned similarly about the fall of Adam and Eve.

The Bundahish has much to tell of Ahriman's evil creatures with which he fills the world, and of the varied mischief they wrought. First of his creatures was Akem Mano, Evil Mind, the counterpart and antagonist of Vohu Mano, the Good Mind. For each of the other Amesha Spentas also he makes a particular deadly foe, but in the others there is no such obvious correspondence; they are, as has already been mentioned, ancient deities, Indra, Sauru, Naonhaithya, Tauru, Zairi—the catalogue is not so constant as that of the good powers. Occasionally Taromaiti, Arrogance, appears as the enemy of Armaiti, Humble Piety.

The Greeks in the 4th century B.C. were acquainted with the fact that the Magi divided the history of the world into periods of three thousand years, of which the present age of conflict is one. This scheme appears in the Bundahish. The cycle is 12,000 years. At the beginning Ahura Mazda produced his spiritual creation, and his creatures remained for three thousand years with intangible bodies, free from corruption. The second period of three thousand years is the period of material creation. In the third, Angra Mainyu breaks into the creation of God and causes the greatest distress; this is the age of human history prior to the revelation of the true religion. At the beginning of the fourth period (Anno Mundi 9000) Zoroaster appears; at its close will be the last judgment. Theopompus, if he is completely reported, seems to have said nothing of the age of the spiritual, or ideal, creation; according to him good and evil prevailed each for three thousand years, then for three thousand—the present—they contended and destroyed each other's works; at the end of this period Hades would succumb and the age of perfect blessedness would begin. It would be incautious on this ground to infer that the first period is a later addition to the scheme: the 12,000 years are plainly a great world-year, and Theopompus is concerned only with the idea of the conflict.

The ideal creation has striking resemblance to Platonic theories. Philo sets forth how God, "when he made up his mind to form this visible world, first produced the intelligible world as its type, in order that, employing a bodiless (immaterial) and most godlike pattern, he might fabricate this bodily world." But the parallel is less significant than striking, for the spiritual world of Ahura Mazda is not the ideal type of the material creation: it is simply the beginning, before the intrusion of the devil, when things were in that perfect state in which they will be at the end when he has been finally banished. The material creation is made necessary by the invasion of the enemy; the battle with him must be waged and the victory won in a real world, with carnal weapons as well as spiritual. Plausible as the hypothesis of Greek influence at first seems to be, closer examination does not sustain it.

According to the Vendidad, Ahura Mazda revealed the true religion in the beginning to Yima, son of Vivanhant, and invited him to proclaim it to men. Yima, however, excused himself: the task was beyond his powers. He accepted the humbler charge, to multiply the creatures, care for them, and rule over them. "In my realm there shall be neither cold wind nor hot wind, nor disease nor death." Ahura Mazda bestowed on him the regalia, a seal and sword. The good creatures multiplied so that thrice the earth had to be enlarged to make room for them. But at the end of this golden age of nine hundred years God announced to Yima the approach of a terrible winter, a kind of ice-age, and bade him make a great shelter in which to keep alive choice specimens of plants and animals and human beings to perpetuate their kind and repeople the earth. This myth of the ice-age destroying plant and animal life, and of the preservation of a remnant in the Var of Yima, is the Iranian parallel to the wide-spread flood-myth, of which the Babylonian and Jewish forms are the most familiar. The arid Iranian lands were no climate for a flood; but of winter, "the worst of plagues, the creation of the demons," they had experience enough.

Long ages elapsed after Yima's "gran rifiuto" before God again designated a prophet of the true religion. The second of the Gathas represents the "soul of the kine" complaining before

him of the cruel wrongs it suffered at the hands of brutal men, and Zoroaster is commissioned to be its deliverer by converting men to the law which makes them merciful to beasts. The Vendidad tells how Angra Mainyu, foreseeing the discomfiture he and his creatures were to suffer at Zoroaster's hands, sent demon emissaries to kill him,[17] but Zoroaster routed them by reciting the confession of faith, Ahuna Vairyu, not to speak of rocks as big as houses that he had ready to pelt the devils with, defiantly declaring his purpose to destroy the fiend's creation. Angra Mainyu begs him not to destroy his creation, and promises him that if he will abjure the good law of Mazda he shall have dominion as wide and long as that of the mythical Vadhaghana, "master of the countries." [18] Zoroaster rejects the offer, and declares that he will put the devils to flight with the apparatus of worship and the holy words. Thereupon the whole host, with cries of terror, precipitately flee down to the world of darkness.[19]

The world is a great battlefield, on which beneficent powers ceaselessly contend with baleful, light with darkness, the vivifying waters with drouth and barrenness, the genial warmth with icy winter; the useful animals are beset by beasts of prey, the industrious peasant and herdsman by the marauding nomads, the civilized Iranians have ever to defend themselves against the wild Turanians. Religion teaches men to see in all this the age-long struggle of Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu, the good God and the demon of destruction, each with his hosts of allies. It teaches, too, that man is not a passive spectator of this war of gods and demons on whose issue his fortunes and his very existence depend, but a combatant in the thick of the fight. Every man is by his own choice arrayed under the one banner or the other, contending for the triumph of the good world or the bad. The whole conflict is moral: the strife of productive and destructive agencies in nature is not the play of physical forces guided by blind laws or blinder chance, but of benevolent and

[17] For the age of this myth it is significant that the name of the demon of idolatry is Buiti (Buddha).

[18] Cf. Matt. 4 8–11.

[19] This attack and rout of the demons is apparently in the infancy of Zoroaster, not at the beginning of his ministry.

malevolent wills. Men, animated by Good Mind or by Evil Mind, battle for the truth and right and goodness or for falsehood and wrong, and their contending is not alone with flesh and blood, but with the "world-rulers of this darkness, the spirit hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." [20] This conception of life as a war with the demons gives its peculiar color to the religion, morals, and customs. In many particulars these resemble the lower religions in which self-defence against evil spirits is the principal feature; but the central theistic and ethical ideas give them a different significance.

The individual believer does not engage in this warfare fighting for his own hand, but as a member of an army. Of the organization of the Zoroastrian state church we have little information. From the Avesta it appears that in Sassanian times the religious heads of the several towns, districts, and provinces constituted an ecclesiastical hierarchy, at the summit of which, the head of the church in the whole empire, stood the Zarathushtrotema, whose seat was at Rai in Media, the system thus corresponding to the political organization as did that of the Christian church in the Roman empire. The ancient name of the priests, the only name in the Avesta,[21] was Athravan, "Fire priest." The Greeks call the Zoroastrian clergy "Magi," which according to Herodotus was the name of a Median tribe; and the Parsis use the same name, the modern Mobed being from *Magupat*, "Head Magian." The priesthood was probably from very early times hereditary in certain families, as it is now.

In heroic antiquity the Yashts tell of sacrifices for "a thousand stallions, a thousand bulls, ten thousand sheep," but in the Zoroastrian religion worship consists essentially in the tending of the sacred fire and the offering of Haoma. The Avesta which we have is the liturgy of the Haoma offering on ordinary and extraordinary occasions. Considerable parts of a lost book of the Sassanian Avesta, the "Instructions for the Priests," have been preserved in Nirangistan. The rubrics in modern copies of the Yasna and the traditional ritual of the Parsis doubtless perpetuate the important features of the ceremonies as they were

[20] Cf. Ephes. 6 10 ff., and with it Minokhired, c. 43, Sacred Books of the East, xxiv, 84.

[21] An exception in Yasna 65 7.

in Sassanian times. Early reliefs and coins show the king standing before a fire altar under the open sky; the Mági, like the modern Mobeds, had portable altars for service in the houses; but there were also from Achaemenian times on, fire shrines, in which the sacred fire was kept burning on an altar, or, as at present, in a vase filled with ashes. Strabo tells how the priests in Cappadocia went daily into these temples and sang for an hour before the fire, holding a bundle of twigs, and wearing a headdress which covered their mouths. The shrine is constructed so as to keep the sunlight from falling on the fire and dimming or extinguishing it, according to a wide-spread belief. The fire is guarded from every kind of pollution; it is fed with scrupulously selected wood—modern Parsis in Bombay use sandalwood—the priest wears a thick veil over his nose and mouth, that his breath may not fall on the fire;[22] his hands are encased in long gauntlets, and the wood is handled with tongs. This service is performed five times a day, at the canonical hours.

No other ceremonies take place in this inmost shrine; the preparation and offering of the Haoma is done in other rooms in the temple. The similarity of these rites to those of Brahman Soma offering shows how tenaciously they have been perpetuated from a time before the forefathers of the Indian and Iranian peoples separated. The twigs of the sacred plant are pounded in a mortar, the expressed juice is mixed with milk and holy water, and strained. The draught thus obtained concentrates in itself all the virtues of plants, animals, and the waters; it is drunk sacramentally by the priests in the course of the service and is administered to the dying as a *φάρμακον ἀθανασίας*. The "green Haoma" of this world is a type of the "white Haoma" of the *gaokorena* tree from which is obtained the draught of immortality. Besides the Haoma, the offering comprises small cakes peculiarly marked, with butter or fat to represent animal sacrifice; these also are eaten by the officiating priest in the course of the service.

In former times eight priests took part in the rite: the Zaotar recited the Gathas as the Hotar recites the Vedic hymns in the

[22] A similar precaution is used by Shinto priests in Japan and by cooks in the Mikado's kitchen.

Brahmanic ritual; another pressed the Haoma, a third mixed it with milk, others tended the fire on the small altar and waited in different capacities on the principal ministers, while a master of ceremonies (corresponding to the Brahman) had general oversight of the whole. At present these various functions are concentrated in the hands of two priests, the Zot (Zaotar), who performs the essential parts of the sacrifice as well as the recitation of the sacred text, while the Raspi, who theoretically represents the three absent priests, assists him and makes the responses. The celebrant must be in the superlative stage of ritual holiness which is acquired by the great purification with cow's urine, the antiseptic for demonic infection; and every stage of the ceremony itself is marked by washings and the immersion of the apparatus in holy water. The principal service is addressed to Ahura Mazda and all the holy divinities of the celestial world; to Zarathushtra and all the holy divinities of this terrestrial world; to the Yazatas who preside in turn over the thirty days of the month, beginning with Ahura Mazda and the six Amesta Spentas, and including the genii of gods and of the pious dead. The central part of the liturgy is the recitation of the Gathas.

The whole cultus is a singularly arid ritualism, consonant with the practical genius of the race. The exact performance of the rite and the exact recitation of the long texts in an unintelligible language is the essential thing; so done, it is sure to be efficacious. It not only procures blessings from the gods, but reinforces the gods, and gives them power to overcome hostile influences and work for good. This is the plain lesson of the Tishtar Yasht, where Tishtrya (Sirius), the rain star, is worsted by the drought demon Apaosha until Ahura Mazda himself offers a sacrifice dedicated to Tishtrya by name; then the demon is ignominiously put to flight and the blessed rain descends. Here, as in many other religions, primitive notions of the magical efficacy of the cultus which seem for a time to be overcome in the development of the idea of the supreme power and goodness of God and the ethical nature of religion come back and intrench themselves impregnably in the ritual. God can be worked for man's advantage by offering, praise, and prayer; or, as theological re-

flection less bluntly puts it, God has appointed these means of moving him to bestow his favors and protection.

A large part of practical religion consists in the observance of the rules of clean and unclean, and in the purifications necessary to repair witting or unwitting infractions of them. Uncleanness in the religious sense is a demonic contagion. The demons and all their ways and works are unclean, and persons and things that get into the infected neighborhood catch the contagion and may communicate it to others. The sphere in which the presence and agency of demons is most clearly seen is death, and here the greatest precautions must be taken. When death is near, a priest is called in; the dying man recites after him his confession of sin, and the priest puts into his mouth some drops of Haoma as a last sacrament. The demon of death is imagined to wear the form of a carrion fly; to drive him away, a dog is brought into the chamber when the body is laid out, if possible a dog with "four eyes," that is with spots of light color above the eyes, or a white dog with yellow ears, for the "glance of the dog" is a terror to demons.[23] Fire is then brought into the room and fed with sweet-smelling wood, the odor of which kills the demons wherever the wind carries it.[24] A priest, sitting at least three yards from the dead, recites Avestan texts until the funeral procession sets out.

This must take place by daylight, and should not be in rainy weather. The body is carried on an iron bier, by bearers whose business it is and who take professional precautions against infection, to the place where it is to be exposed. In ancient times this might be a dry and barren spot, far from the abode of men; but special structures for the purpose, the Dakhmas (now called in India "towers of silence"), are mentioned in the Avesta. The motive of this singular mode of disposing of the dead is to prevent the defiling of the elements; it is from a Zoroastrian point of view a mortal sin to burn a body or to inhume it. The modern Dakhma is so constructed that the rain which may fall on the bodies is rapidly carried off in a catch-basin, and thence

[23] This performance is repeated at intervals so long as the body remains in the house.

[24] This seems to be the original motive for the use of incense in the worship of the gods.

through filters into cisterns. The vultures make quick work of the bodies thus exposed; the bones (which when dry are no longer unclean) are from time to time cast into the central pit.[25] Religious services for the benefit of the deceased are kept up for three days, partly in the house, partly in the fire-temple, directed especially to Sraosha, the psychopompos, and are observed with especial diligence on the fourth day, on which the soul confronts the judgment at the Çinvat bridge; during this time the mourners fast from flesh.

For those who have contracted uncleanness by contact with a dead body from which the devil has not been driven away by beasts or birds of prey, and who are therefore themselves possessed by the demon Nasu (νέκυς), a purification is prescribed in the Vendidad. The active disinfectant is cow's urine applied by aspersion, whereby the demon is driven successively from one lodging-place to another, from head to foot, till at last he escapes from the left great-toe and rushes away, buzzing wildly, to the mountains of the north where the devils are at home. For greater assurance, this is gone through five times more. Then the man rubs himself down with dry earth, and finally washes in water at three depressions in the ground, at the first once, at the second twice, at the third three times. These purifications are repeated at intervals of three days, during which the man must remain in quarantine, and only at the end of the ninth day may he approach the fire or water or earth, or cattle or the faithful. If the demon had been expelled by dogs or birds of prey, washing of the body with cow's urine and water thirty times repeated suffices. A field in which the dead body of a dog is found lying must remain fallow for a year. To throw out on the ground any part of the body of a man or the carcass of a dog of the size of a joint of the little finger or larger is punishable by stripes in proportion, up to a thousand blows of the horsewhip. The ground in which a body has been buried is unclean for fifty years. Running or standing water in which a body is found is unclean; how far, and what to do about it, are subjects of long-drawn-out casuistry. A large part of the Vendidad is taken up with these

[25] The Dakhmas are the favorite haunts of demons who smite men with all manner of diseases.

matters. By a singular yet strictly logical theory, the body of an evil beast, creature of Ahriman, or of an idolator or heretic, is not unclean: the devil who was in him while he was alive has now gone off with his soul, leaving the body pure. Eating the flesh of a dead man or dog is an inexpiable sin.

Next to death the most redoubtable uncleanness is that of a menstruous woman. She is shut up in an isolated apartment, remote from fire and water, from the bunch of sacred twigs, and from believers, and receives her meagre allowance of food in a metal vessel; whoever brings this food must keep at least nine feet away from the woman. If menstruation is prolonged, it is because the demons have brought this scourge upon her; the cow's urine panacea is prescribed again, and revenge is taken on the demons by killing some hundreds of Ahrimanian insects such as ants. Needless to say, commerce with a woman in such a state is a deadly sin: it is as bad, the Vendidad declares, as if a man roasted the flesh of his own son and let the fat run into the fire. Childbirth is similarly unclean, and anyone who touches the mother catches the uncleanness. The same rigid quarantine lasts forty days, and is followed by a similar purification. Much graver is the case of a woman who has had a still-born child or a miscarriage. She is shut up in absolute seclusion for three days, without food or drink; then the Dakhma within her is disinfected by a draught of cow's urine and ashes, after which small rations of boiled milk, or gruel made in milk, or wine without water are allowed; only in peril of death may she be given water, and this profanation of the pure element must be penally expiated. We are familiar with the same notions and with similar, if less rigorous, religious regulations in the Jewish laws, but there the association of uncleanness with demonic influence is not so obvious.

Diseases were brought into the world by the malice of Angra Mainyu; some of them, like leprosy, are in a peculiar degree unclean, and demand the seclusion of the victim from the company of men and the proximity of the pure fire and water and the apparatus of worship. Some can be cured by the knife, others by healing plants which Ahura Mazda created as specifics for the demonic maladies; but the final resort is to the beneficent divine

word, the incantation in the Avesta itself, above all the potent formula Airyama Ishyo (Yasna 54), the prayer to Airyama, who puts to flight diseases, death, pain, and fever, every disease and every death, all the Yatus and all the Pairikas and all the evil Jainis.[26]

The ethics of Zoroastrianism bear the distinct impress of its fundamental religious conceptions. The good life is an unceasing conflict against evil within and without. Virtue, like purity, is a defeat of the demons. Morals have therefore a strenuous and militant quality. There is no place for saints who flee from the world; the saint is he who overcomes the evil in the world. Character lies not in overt act alone, but in the inner springs of conduct; "good thoughts, good words, good deeds," is the ever recurring formula.

Among the virtues of the Mazdayasnian, truth has the foremost place: the devil is a liar, and the father of lies. In the Gathas, as we have seen, the Lie (Druj) is the comprehensive name for the demon host and its head, and the world of the Lie is hell. It may well be that the false religion of the Daevas is here chiefly in mind, but in later times, when this phase of the conflict was past, the words bore a more general sense. The Greeks were much impressed by the value the Persians set on truth and by the prominent place they gave it in the education of well-born youths. They abhor falsehood above everything, Herodotus says, and next to that, making debts, for that leads to lying and fraud. A special form of this virtue is good faith in keeping promises and agreements. Mithra is the guardian and vindicator of oaths and covenants; the man who breaks his solemn word is a "Mithra-liar," and incurs the honest god's deadly wrath. "The miscreant who lies to Mithra brings death on a whole country, he harms the good world as much as a hundred malefactors could do. Never break an agreement, O Spitama, neither one that you make with a wicked man nor with an upright man of your own religion; for an agreement holds with both wicked and upright."[27] Perjury is as bad as a hundred heresies—an extraordinary triumph of ethics over orthodoxy!

[26] Names of classes of demons. See Vendidad 20.

[27] Mithra Yasht 1.

Justice and equity—righteousness in the widest sense in dealing with fellow men—has its ideal and presiding genius in Asha, personified Right. The unjust judge is denounced in the Gathas; it is related of Cambyses that he flayed a corrupt judge, and, for an effective reminder, covered with his skin the chair on which his son was seated to succeed him.[28] Justice, next to truth, was inculcated in the education of princes and noble youth.

What we should regard as moral offences in the relations of the sexes fall chiefly, from the Zoroastrian point of view, into the class of impurity, which, however, we do well to remember, is not merely physiological but moral. Paederasty and bestiality, unnatural vices, are crimes punished by death; the offender caught *flagrante delictu* may be killed on the spot by any man, without trial. They are also mortal sins for which there is no repentance or expiation; hell is the inevitable punishment in the other world. Such a sinner is wholly demonic in this life, and hereafter becomes one of the invisible demons (Vendidad 5 32). The prostitute is a dire affliction of gods and men, a human demon, whose look dries up the waters and withers the plants; such creatures should be killed sooner than vipers or wolves. Abortion is treated as homicide.

Since all barren land belongs to the devil, reclamation of such land by irrigation is a meritorious work; he who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before is not only a benefactor of his kind but a faithful servant of God.

> "Who most makes glad the earth? He who plants the most grain, grass, and fruit trees, who brings water to a field where there is none and draws it off where there is too much." "How is the Mazdaean religion nourished? By zealously sowing grain. He who sows grain sows good; he makes the religion of Mazda progress, he nourishes the religion of Mazda as much as a hundred men's feet could do, a thousand women's breasts, ten thousand formulas of the liturgy. When grain was created the devils jumped, when it grew they lost heart, when the joints appeared they wept, when the ear was formed they fled away. In the house where grain perishes the demons abide, but when grain comes up in abundance it is like hot iron in their mouths." [29]

[28] Herodotus v, 25; cf. vii, 194.

[29] Vendidad 3 23 ff.

When the cock, before daybreak, calls men to arise and say their morning prayers, the long-armed Bushyasta, the lazy devil, assails them, "Sleep on, poor man! it is not time yet," but he who at cock-crowing first gets up will be the first in paradise.[30] Compassion and benevolence are also strongly commended in the Avesta; in the Ahuna Vairya, one of the most sacred formulas of the religion, which we may call an ethical confession of faith, charity is declared to be the foundation of the Kingdom of God, "He who succors the poor causes Ahura to reign."

Morals are in the later Avesta part of a sacred law, and that law includes in the same categories and under the same sanctions much that is not intrinsically moral at all, or to which religion gives fictitious moral values. This is one of the universal evils of nomistic religions: ritual correctness, ceremonial purity, sacerdotal casuistry, are raised to the dignity of moral obligations, with the effect of confusing the fundamental difference between them. The dog, especially the shepherd dog, is a very useful animal in a pastoral society, and it is not strange that killing or maltreating him should be a grave offence against the law; but the penalties in this world and the next which the Vendidad attaches to these offences make a dog's life more sacred than a man's. The hedgehog is a great destroyer of the creatures of the evil spirit; a man who kills one shall abide in hell for nine generations unless he expiates his offence on earth by thousands of stripes with the horsewhip. Still more sacred is the otter, probably because it is supposed to destroy noxious water vermin; a whole chapter is devoted to the expiation of the enormous crime of killing one, beginning with ten thousand strokes of the horsewhip. If nothing is more important in morals than a just sense of proportion, not much can be said for the Vendidad. It is fair to observe, however, that such extravagances have the air of priestly fantasias, like some of the incredible programmes of sacrifice of the Brahmanas rather than of serious chapters of legislation.

The legal spirit appears also in the system of penances by which offences are expiated. The commonest of these penances is horsewhipping, and the scale runs from five stripes up to ten thousand.

[30] Vendidad 18 37.

The flagellation was doubtless supposed to drive out the demons, a frequent motive of this pious exercise. A large class of more serious sins are expiated by two hundred stripes; so, for example, if a man give another a blow of which he dies, for the first offence the penalty is ninety stripes, for the second, two hundred. Wilful murder is rated at eight hundred; nocturnal emission [31] (i.e. intercourse with a succubus) at two thousand. The scale runs into such high numbers that the beating must either have been symbolical or commuted for a fine paid to the priests.

Other penances were the providing of materials for worship—a thousand loads of choice wood for the sacred fire, a thousand bundles of twigs (Baresman), a thousand libations of Haoma, for example. Works useful to the community, especially the digging of irrigation canals and the construction of bridges, are also prescribed in expiation of sins. The killing of noxious or demonic animals is another mode—serpents, tortoises, frogs, ants, worms, and the like, by thousands. Here, again, the priests probably had a tariff of commutation for money, but a system in which every offence has its fixed price cannot be regarded as favorable to morality. Not all sins, however, can be thus compounded for: there are inexpiable sins, such as the inhumation of the body of a man or a dog by a Zoroastrian who knows that it is forbidden by his religion, polluting water or fire by putting a dead body into the pure elements, eating the flesh of a dead man or dog, unnatural vice, and so on. It is to be noted that if a heathen who has committed a deadly sin embraces the Mazdaean faith, repenting of his fault and purposing never to sin thus again, the religion removes all his former sins, however heinous,[32] precisely like Christian baptism. As in all religions which derive their authority from a prophetic revelation and have formulated the content of revelation in dogma, apostasy and heresy are the greatest of sins, for they are the rejection or perversion of the truth of God.

The hereafter loomed large in Zoroastrianism from the outset. The approaching crisis, the great judgment day when all the powers of evil (the Lie, Druj) shall be delivered into the hands of Justice (Asha), their whole army beaten down and shattered,

[31] Cf, Leviticus 15 16; 22 4.
[32] Vendidad 3 40 ff.

when the ordeal of molten metal divides between the servants of God and the worshippers of the demons, is one of the ruling ideas in the Gathas. The prophet knows but two kinds of men, those who are for him and those who are against him, on the side of truth and right or opposed to them, allies of god or of the devil. To these contradictory characters correspond their diverse destinies. The Zoroastrian heaven and hell are not primarily conceived as spheres of retribution, but as the places of God and of the devil, and every man, as he has chosen to serve the one or the other, goes to his own place; it is this that gives them their distinctive character. On the other hand, as the line of moral cleavage is run through the natural world, and even the kingdoms of plants and animals are divided between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu, this very hardening of the dualism made the final and complete triumph of good over evil in every sphere a more vital article of faith. As has already been observed, these two aspects of the doctrine, the individual retribution and the end of all evil, are in the Gathas embraced in one great act of judgment. Time introduced perspective into the Persian eschatology as it did into that of the early Christians. The soul goes to its reward or punishment immediately at death; when the appointed time is fulfilled, the body will be raised from the dead and the last judgment will be held.

After death—so runs the simplest story in the Hadokht Yasht—the soul of the righteous lingers three days and nights near the head of the body, reciting the hymn that begins, "Good comes to him who does good to another; may Mazda, the Almighty, give him his gifts," in bliss as great as the whole world of the living contains. At daybreak on the fourth day a perfumed breeze comes wafted to him as it were from the south, and with it comes to him a beautiful maiden, who, at his question, declares herself his own religion, fair with his virtues and pious observances. Through the three forecourts of good thoughts, good words, good deeds, the soul passes into the endless light, into the company of the good and the presence of Ahura Mazda. Other texts add more details. Sraosha and other good angels conduct the soul to the Çinvat bridge, protecting it from the assaults of demons by the way. There Mithra, Sraosha, and Rashnu sit in

judgment. Rashnu weighs a man's merits and demerits in the true balance, which does not deviate from justice by a hair's breadth and shows no partiality, but deals alike with the mightiest monarch and the meanest of mankind. Religion goes into the scale, it is needless to say, as well as morality: the good Zoroastrian profession of faith and the penitent confession of sins weigh heavily on the side of salvation, and the funeral mass which the friends of the departed cause to be celebrated is another good work put to his credit. Then he must make essay of the bridge itself, which stretches from the peak of Mount Daitya to the summit of the Elburz, spanning the abyss of hell. For the good it is nine spear-lengths wide, or even a parasang, and he passes with ease to the heavenly mansions on the other side; the wicked finds it narrow as a razor blade, and pitches headlong into the gulf below.

Beyond the bridge, the soul which has happily crossed it comes first to the limbo where those in whom good works and evil were evenly balanced abide till the day of the resurrection, suffering no other pain than the climatic changes of heat and cold. Then follow the three regions of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, that is, according to Persian notion, of the celestial spheres, the sphere of the stars, of the moon, and of the sun, respectively. The older writings do not seem to have any permanent occupants of these regions; they are successive forecourts of the highest heaven. In the journey of Arda Viraf, however, he sees in them souls who on earth "made no prayers, recited no Gathas, contracted no consanguineous marriages," but through other good works came thither; in the highest are such as "in the world exercised good sovereignty, rulership, and chieftainship," as if they were limbos for good heathen.

The "infinite light" is the abode of Ahura Mazda with the archangels and the spirits of the just. When the soul arrives there, the pious dead throng around the new-comer inquiring, "How art thou come from the material world to the world of spirit, from the perishing world to that which perishes not?" but Ahura Mazda bids them not recall to the spirit the distressful journey, and commands that angels' food, butter made in the height of spring, be set before the traveller,[33] and that he be given a richly

[33] The spiritual world is, therefore, not without its creature comforts.

adorned throne. "Forever and everlasting they remain in all glory with the angels of the spiritual existences eternally."

Very different is the lot of the wicked. His soul lingers about the body in great perturbation for three days, murmuring the words of the Gatha, "To what land shall I turn, O Ahura Mazda, whither direct my prayer?" and suffering all of distress that the world holds. The fourth morning, a cold blast, as out of the demonic north, smites him, laden with foul stench. A demon lassoes the soul with his evil noose and drags him to the bridge, where Rashnu with his balances detects all his wickedness. His evil ways confront him embodied in a hideous witch, whose ugliness is the expression of his character. Hell has its vestibules, evil thoughts, evil words, evil deeds, through which the damned arrive in the "infinite darkness," where the wicked dead surround him, the demons mock him, and Angra Mainyu bids bring him loathsome and poisonous food. "And until the resurrection he must be in hell in much misery and torments of many kinds."

The book of Arda Viraf narrates how this pious man's soul was conducted by Sraosha through heaven and hell and safely reinstalled in his body to tell the tale, an Iranian parallel to Enoch, or still more closely to the Apocalypse of Peter and the mediaeval Christian vision literature, and a rude forerunner of Dante. The author's imagination does not succeed in giving much variety to heaven: golden thrones, fine carpets, rich cushions, gorgeous raiment, fragrant perfumes, and over all the glorious light, exhaust his resources. Hell is, as usual, much more vividly depicted. Its darkness is so dense that, though the souls are crowded thick together, each imagines himself alone, and when three days have passed he thinks the nine thousand years must be over and the hour of release at hand. Further on the voyager sees men and women subjected to all manner of ingenious tortures, often retaliatory, as when the man who talked at the dinner table, and said no grace over meat but greedily devoured his water and vegetables, is tormented by hunger and thirst, crying ever, "I shall die"; or the tradesman who gave short measure, and watered his wine and put dust in his grain, and sold his adulterated foodstuffs at high prices, has to spend the millenniums of his sojourn in hell measuring dust and ashes in a bushel and getting nothing

else to eat; or, again, a woman is condemned to lick a hot stove with her tongue because she answered back snappishly to her husband. The catalogue of sins is long and repetitious, and the writer's ingenuity in devising tortures runs out before he is through. Last of all Arda Viraf sees the fiend himself, who taunts the sufferers, "Why did ye ever eat the bread of Ahura Mazda and do my work, and thought not of your own creator but did my will?" Returning then to heaven, he is dismissed by Ahura Mazda with a parting injunction: "Say to the Mazdayasnians, 'There is only one way of piety, the way of the primitive religion; the other ways are no ways. Take ye that one way which is piety, and turn not from it in prosperity nor in adversity . . . and practise good thoughts and good words and good deeds . . . and keep the proper law, but abstain from the improper. And know ye this, that cattle are dust, and gold and silver are dust, and the body of man is dust; he alone mingles not with the dust who in the world praises righteousness and performs duties and good works.'"

The bliss of souls in heaven and their torments in hell are not the final state of mankind. When the appointed time comes, Shaoshyant, the Saviour, will appear, and the dead will be raised, beginning with Gayomard, the archetypal man, and Mashya and Mashoi, the first pair of human beings. All, righteous and wicked, will rise in the places where they died, the bones being demanded back from the earth, the blood from the water, the hair from the plants, and the life from the fire, to which they have respectively been delivered, so that the body is reconstituted of its original materials.[34] The risen dead will be assembled in one place and will know one another; the deeds of all will be manifest, so that the wicked man will be as conspicuous as a white sheep among black ones.[35] The wicked will reproach his pious friend for not turning him from the evil of his ways. Then the righteous and the wicked will be separated, the former going to heaven, while the latter are cast into hell, there to be punished in the body for three days, certain monsters of iniquity being subjected to exemplary sufferings. When this is over, the fire will

[34] This is Christian doctrine also. Cf. Athenagoras, De resurrectione, cc. 3. ff.
[35] Black being the common color.

melt the metal in the mountains till it flows like a river, and in its stream all are made pure. To the righteous it will be like walking in warm milk, to the wicked it will be molten metal. Father and son, brother and friend, will inquire, "Where hast thou been these many years, and what was the judgment on thy soul? Wast thou of the righteous or the wicked?" All men become of one speech, and loudly praise Ahura Mazda and the archangels. Shaoshyant then sacrifices the ox Hadhayos, and of his fat and of the white Haoma is prepared the ambrosia (*Hush*) which is given to all men, the food of immortality. Adults are restored as men and women of forty; children as youths of fifteen. Each man has his own wife and knows his own offspring; the life is like that of this world, but there is no begetting of children.

Finally, Ahura Mazda seizes the Evil Spirit, and each of the Amesha Spentas lays hold of his antagonist among the archfiends, Sraosha grappling with Aeshma. The devil flees back into gloom and darkness by the passage by which he first invaded the upper world; hell itself is purified by the molten metal, and is reclaimed for the enlargement of the world. Thus by God's will the restitution of all things is accomplished, and the world is immortal forever and aye. The mountains, which were created by the evil one, are levelled, even the summit which served as abutment for the Çinvat bridge; the earth becomes an even plain, never again buried in ice.

The Zoroastrian dogmatic chronology counts 12,000 years from the beginning of the spiritual creation to the renovation of the world, in four ages of three millenniums each. The revelation to Zoroaster and the founding of the true religion fall at the beginning of the last age, the appearance of Shaoshyant at its close. As in the preceding age each millennium has its salient figure, so the millenniums which lie between Zoroaster's appearance and the end are to have their heroes, bearing the significant names Increaser of Good and Increaser of Prayer, in the Bundahish, Hushedar and Hushedar-mah, who restore the good religion and deliver its oppressed people. Both these and the final deliverer, Shoshans (Shaoshyant), are in a miraculous way sons of Zoroaster.

These Messianic expectations, which are found in the Fra-

vardin Yasht as well as in the Bundahish, are worked up in a remarkable apocalypse, the so-called Bahman Yasht, in which are revealed to Zoroaster the successive periods of history (four or seven) down to the close of his millennium, the iron age when the myriad demons with dishevelled hair of the race of Aeshma (Wrath) invade Iran from the East, and leather-belted Turks and Arabs and Christians make a reign of terror. In this dark time, Hushedar will be born, and, with gods and heroes on his side, will destroy the heathen hordes and their demon allies in a veritable Armageddon.

Zoroastrianism is frequently described as a dualism. To the Gathas, as we have seen, the term is inapplicable, and for the religion of Achaemenian times it is not without significance that Aristotle,[36] though acquainted with the two principles, the good and the evil *daimones*, Oromasdes and Areimanios, yet in the Metaphysics classes the Magi with philosophers like Empedocles and Anaxagoras who made the supremely good the first principle and ground of being. The name dualism might seem more appropriate to the doctrine of later writings, such as the Bundahish, which make Ahriman the creator, not only of the demons, but of all that is bad in the natural world, from the wandering planets to the noisome insects. To Moslem controversialists, for whom creation was one of the chief attributes of deity, a creative devil was plainly an evil god; but this is only the logic of opponents, not Zoroastrian teaching or fair implication from it. The Bundahish itself contrasts in the strongest way the omniscience of Ahura Mazda with the limitations of the evil spirit's knowledge either of the present or of the future. It was through ignorance of the event that he accepted the conditions of the nine thousand years' conflict proposed by Ahura Mazda. He has no power to destroy the creatures of God or permanently to deprive him of them by drawing them to his side. However in the present age evil may seem to prevail, the outcome is certain: the works of the devil shall be destroyed, and he forever banished; the earth will be renewed, and hell itself purged by fire; men whom the evil spirit has seduced from their allegiance to God, after receiving the just retribution of their evil deeds,

[36] According to Diogenes Laertius.

will be purified and restored to the eternal life of holiness, and all evil will be forever done away. The triumph of God is in this respect more complete than in Christianity, which leaves hell, with the devil and his angels, and the wicked in torment forever, an unconquered realm of evil.

The "dualism" of Zoroastrianism, as has been said above, is an attempt to account for the evil of the present world, physical as well as moral, upon the premises of an ethical theism which cannot admit that God is the author of any kind of evil. But because God is almighty as well as perfectly good, it can as little admit that evil, even in hell, is a permanent factor in the universe. The Zoroastrian theologians were concerned with the solution of the ethical problem rather than with the remoter problems which their solution raised. The evil spirit appears on the scene like a *diabolus ex machina;* whether he was eternal they do not seem to have asked, nor would they probably have been much disturbed if their logic had carried them to that conclusion, for since they did not define God metaphysically as the infinite and the eternal, but as the good, an eternal devil would not thereby become God. Acquaintance with Greek philosophy or Christian polemics ultimately raised this question, however, and a school of Zoroastrian thinkers posited as the unitary first principle, space or time, from which were separated a good god and an evil demon.[37] The one undivided nature being thus divided, these form the dual system of higher powers, one headed by Ormazd, the other by Ahriman. Theodore of Mopsuestia reports that Zervan (Time), whom he calls also Tyche, was the origin of all things, and that, in the act of making a libation to produce Ormazd, by some error in the rite, he produced both Ormazd and Satan. Shahrastani, in his History of Doctrines, describes a sect of Zervanites who held that Ahriman was born of a doubt in the mind of the great Zervan. This theory seems to be controverted in the Selections of Zad Sparam, 1 24, where it is declared that Ahura Mazda produced the "creature Zervan" (Time). There is no reason to think that the Zervanite metaphysics ever had any religious significance.

[37] Damascius, ed. Kopp, p. 384.

The influence of Persian thought in the West was not confined to its eschatology, nor did it all pass through Jewish channels. It was long ago observed that in the Pauline Epistles the war with evil is not merely a conflict against sinful impulse in a man's self nor against evils in human society; it is a battle with cosmic powers, waged not with "flesh and blood," but "against the principalities, against the powers, against the universal rulers of this dark world, against the hosts of wicked spirits in the heavens," a hierarchy of evil spirits, at whose head is the Evil One, sovereign of the air (that is, of the heavens). The Pauline devil is a figure of commanding rank and of vast power in the universe: Paul calls him outright "the god of this age of the world" (2 Cor. 4 4). A similar position is accorded him in the Johannean books: he is the "ruler of this world" (John 12 31). Judaism never conceded so much independence to its Satan, or Belial. It is not to be imagined that the New Testament writers had any first-hand acquaintance with Zoroastrian literature or religion; but ideas ultimately derived thence may well have been current in Asia Minor. The marked fondness of John for the antithesis of light and darkness may have a similar explanation.

From Asia Minor, where, as has been already noted, his worship was especially popular, the religion of Mithra spread through the Greek and Roman world in the early centuries of our era. In the mysteries, Mithra was the divine Saviour; by initiation into them men sought the salvation of their souls. Mithra was for several generations the most serious rival of Christ in the West. It was Renan, I think, who said that, if the progress of Christianity had been checked in the third century, Mithraism might have become the religion of Europe. Speculations about what might have happened in history if something else had not happened are usually idle, but it is at least interesting to reflect that in Mithraism an Indo-European redemptive religion contested among the Western races of that stock the pre-eminence of Christianity, with its Semitic warp.

TWO BIOGRAPHIES OF MARTIN LUTHER[1]

JOHN WINTHROP PLATNER

ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Luther is a fascinating subject for the historian. Not only does the personality of the man himself offer exceptional attractions, but so too does the age in which he lived, for then society, politics, and religion were all in the melting-pot, out of which in time was to issue the modern world. Luther was a product of the old, but he was also in a very true sense the exponent of the new. "The world is not what it once was," said he to the German nobles,—knowing that again the fulness of the times had come. The favorite assertion of many German writers that Luther was the Reformation is often disputed, yet the statement is not half so exaggerated as it sounds, for if ever the spirit of a great movement which permanently affected the welfare of mankind got itself embodied in the person of one man, that movement was the Protestant revolution, and that man was Friar Martin.

The Empire, which theoretically controlled the western world, was politically unstable. Maximilian, to be sure, cherished vast dynastic hopes, cryptically expressed in his inherited Hapsburg motto, A. E. I. O. U., an acrostic of the vowels,—*Austriae est imperare orbi universo*,—but both he and his successor, Charles V, found their self-imposed life-task so stupendous as to be impossible. Against their ambitious plan of imperial centralization was set the power of an aristocratic confederacy, represented by the seven Prince Electors, each of whom, quite naturally although perhaps inconsistently, sought at the same time to tighten his own hold upon the particular domain which he governed.

[1] Martin Luther, the Man and his Work, by Arthur Cushman McGiffert. pp. xi 397. New York, The Century Co., 1911. $3 net.

The Life and Letters of Martin Luther, by Preserved Smith. pp. xvi 490. Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911. $3.50 net.

Their exercise of power was checked in its turn by the varying degrees of territorial independence asserted by the German princes, while private warfare disturbed the peace, and turbulent *Bundschue* threatened the stability of social and political institutions alike. None of these conflicting elements gave promise of producing a strong and enduring German nationality. But through their confusion sounded the clear note of Luther's *Address to the German Nobles*, and that called the nation into life.

European society in the early sixteenth century presented the familiar spectacle of privileged classes, full-grown and in control, with the spirit of democracy as yet only struggling to be born. Occasional agrarian uprisings foretold the coming of Demos, but an adequate platform upon which Demos might stand was yet to be constructed. Popular demands, crude in themselves and cruder still in the method of their attempted enforcement, were not enough. Neither was uncontrolled radicalism adequate, nor any programme of social revolution devoid of moral restraints. The age called for constructive effort. The primary need was of some one who could search out and formulate the democratic principle; whether he applied it consistently and thoroughly was of less moment. Luther's masterly treatise, *On the Liberty of a Christian Man*, however paradoxical it might seem to a superficial reader, met the fundamental requirements of the situation. Indeed, it met them so completely that, in spite of all the intervening years, the world has not yet fully succeeded in carrying out the noble programme there laid down. Its merit consisted chiefly in this, that it offered to the forces of emancipation, set in action by the spirit of the Renaissance, a religious motive and a moral direction. To bring the world's life under the influence of this dominant motive was more than could be accomplished by any one man, however great.

The monk of Wittenberg unquestionably did influence the course of politics and of social life in modern Europe, but yet, when all has been said, it still remains true that his principal contribution to the world was not in either of these fields, important as they may be, but rather in the field of religion, which is the most important of all. To understand his profound influence here, it is necessary to call the historical imagination to our aid, since

otherwise it is extremely difficult for the modern secular mind to comprehend how completely the church dominated mediaeval Europe. It touched life at every point, literally from the cradle to the grave. The mysteries of the great Beyond were illumined by the light of its faith, and the severities of future punishment alleviated through application of the inexhaustible resources of the *thesaurus meritorum*. Kings and emperors had vied with each other in granting to churches and monasteries every kind of immunity and privilege, and under the feudal system bishoprics and abbeys had taken on the character of vast temporal domains, comparable in extent and power with those of secular princes, and often superior to them in actual influence. For the ecclesiastical prince bore a double character; he held the customary feudal sovereignty over lands, revenues, and men, and he also held the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Over all was extended the supreme authority of the Pope, who had ample beatitudes for his obedient children, but for the disobedient the ban, the anathema, and final excommunication. The papal system appeared to be thoroughly intrenched and hedged about with walls and bulwarks. Its arsenals were fully supplied with defensive and offensive weapons. The fold of the Good Shepherd had become an embattled fortress and a prison-house for many souls.

The Ninety-five Theses struck the first blow for freedom. Then came the treatise, *On the Babylonish Captivity of the Church*, which made a breach in the walls of Rome, and was like the opening of the prison to them that were bound. One hardly knows which to admire most, the audacity of Luther's attack or its effectiveness. That one of the foremost of the crowned heads of Europe undertook to reply to Luther's tract is the best evidence of its success.

The positive part of the Protestant programme was boldly adventurous and undeniably attended with hazard. In comparison with its severe demands upon the heart and will the mediaeval church offered spiritual ease and the narcotic of mental peace. Men were invited to commit themselves unreservedly to the church, whereby consciously and deliberately they transferred to the sacrosanct institution all responsibility for their

souls' future welfare, which was in a manner guaranteed to them. Protestantism on the other hand demanded from every one of its adherents that he somehow gain for himself the assurance of salvation. His responsibility was immediate, untransferable, and very pressing. The new individualism, with its glorious sense of personal liberty, had its perils and its tasks. It is easy to be a slave, but it is hard to be free. Upon the serious observer, whose spirit is at all sensitive to the moral issues of life, the sixteenth century cannot fail to make a profound impression, for in it one may behold humanity taking a momentous step forward, into the dark. Luther led the van,—light-hearted, courageous, confident,—a smile of gladness on his lips.

But there was a deep seriousness underneath it all. Once in the darkest days of the Civil War a man complained to Lincoln of his apparent levity, and received the touching answer, "If I couldn't tell these stories, I should die." A laugh sometimes keeps a heart from breaking. Something like this was doubtless true of Martin Luther. His profound seriousness cannot for a moment be doubted. When certain well-meaning friends urged him to adopt a policy of comprehension through compromise, such as Melanchthon frequently advocated, Luther sternly said, "I see they think this is a comedy of men, instead of a tragedy of God and Satan, as it is." Such have the world's leaders ever found their task,—a battle,—tragic wrestling with powers which are not merely flesh and blood.

We may safely go a long distance with the enthusiastic German followers of the great Reformer, when they say that Luther was the Reformation. Nevertheless we must not hastily suppose that all the forces which were making the old world new were concentrated in his person. For one thing, the transformation of learning in western Europe had begun before him, and would have gone on without him. His primary interests were practical and moral, not intellectual or aesthetic. So far as the fresh intellectual life of the age is concerned, he felt comparatively little interest in it, apart from its bearing on the subject of religion. He spoke his word indeed, wherever there was opportunity. With particular zest did he denounce the long regnant philosopher Aristotle,—that "damnable, proud, cunning heathen,"

who "led astray and deluded many of the best Christians with his false words." But the philosopher's fate was sealed long before Luther penned his indignant and picturesque malediction. Friar Martin was not the apostle of the Renaissance, even for Germany. In the domain of pure learning Reuchlin, Melanchthon, and especially Erasmus contributed far more to the world's advancement than Luther ever could have done. "I was born," he once declared, "to fight with mobs and devils, and so my books are very stormy and warlike. . . . I am the rough woodsman who must blaze the trail and clear the path. But Master Philip comes along gently and quietly, builds and plants, sows and waters with joy, according to the gifts God has so richly bestowed upon him."

Nor was Luther primarily and of choice a leader in the cause of German nationality. He did no doubt make very substantial contributions to the growth of German national feeling, nor would it be right to say that these contributions were indirect. Without him it is certain that that feeling would have been much slower in development. Simply to have pointed out the need of it was much. "We are a gigantic mass but lack direction," was his own diagnosis of the case. Echoing Luther, the humanist Melanchthon called Germany "a blinded Polyphemus." If the first step forward is to know with certainty just where one stands, then Luther may fairly be said to have led his countrymen in their national advance. But one may recognize this aspect of his work without drawing the mistaken inference that he first propounded the important political principle of the autonomy of the state. Elsewhere in Europe forces of an entirely different kind had been working towards the same end,—in France, for instance, through the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges, and in England through the Acts of Provisors and Praemunire. Probably the Germans themselves would not have advanced so fast and so far towards a genuine national life, in spite of the Reformer's influence, had not the Turkish forces on the east and the armies of Francis I on the west diverted the Emperor's attention from his Saxon subjects, leaving them measurably free to develop from within. It is plain enough to every student that there were princes, statesmen, scholars, and reformers, scattered over western Europe, all consciously

or unconsciously co-operating to bring about national consolidation, quite apart from the monk of Wittenberg.

All this, however, detracts in no degree from Luther's fame. He will always occupy a unique position in the history of his time, and every comparison between him and other leaders serves, in the end, only to establish his superiority. In effective moral leadership none of his contemporaries, not even Zwingli, can for a moment be compared with him. He led men back from their self-made pomps and vanities to the Gospel as the foundation of their faith,—back to the forgiving love of God in Christ. Extraordinarily full of interest is this German peasant! Of humble birth, and yet the friend of princes; a monk, and yet a man; a revolutionist, and yet a conserver of the past. Through his lecture-room in the university he multiplied himself a hundredfold. From his pulpit in the castle church he preached the Gospel to Wittenberg. Through his translation of the Bible and his hymns he preached it to all Germany. And through the printing-press he taught the world. Martyrdom for the cause he long expected, and indeed desired, but he was spared for the more arduous witness-bearing of a long and laborious life. Unmatched in the art of polemics, dauntless in combat, a master of invective, a magnificent fighter, he could yet be as playful as a child, as gentle and tender as a woman. Imperfect no doubt he was,—hasty, hot-tempered, at times mistaken,—but a most rare spirit, a nobleman, a Christian.

To those who sympathize with the principles of the Protestant Reformation, the most attractive and at the same time the most impressive period of Luther's career falls within the first five years. Then, in the prime of his powers, exultant in his newly found spiritual freedom, increasingly confident of success, notwithstanding what princes, priests, or popes might do against him, he sprang into the lists and fought the good fight of faith. Carlyle called the Theses "the first stroke of honest demolition to an ancient thing grown false and idolatrous." In explanation of his boldness, Luther afterwards declared that he had received from heaven the gift of depending upon himself instead of others. From being an object of contempt and derision to the powerful hierarchy, he soon became the object of their dread and hatred.

The time came when a single burning message from his pen struck something very like terror to the heart of the proud bishop and elector, Albert of Mayence, and again to that of Duke George of Saxony. The duke's son complained of Luther's prayers against his father, so potent were they believed to be at the heavenly throne. There is a fine scorn in the scene enacted outside the Elster gate of Wittenberg, where, in the presence of pupils and colleagues, Luther committed to the flames the papal bull of excommunication together with the canon law. In dramatic intensity, however, this scene must yield to the more famous one at the Diet of Worms, where Luther stood calmly defiant in the presence of the assembled powers of the Empire, and made his great refusal.

In open rebellion against the Pope, Luther clung tenaciously to his belief in the duty of passive obedience to the civil power in civil affairs. He insisted that his followers should not attempt to establish their cause by force of arms, even though many of them were clamoring for armed resistance. When at last the Schmalkaldic League was formed, its advocates won Luther's reluctant assent to their plans only by bringing forward an ancient law which seemed to allow subjects in certain contingencies to resist the emperor. Luther's own account of the matter betrays a feeling of disgust, thinly masked by a scholastic justification of their contention. He writes to Spengler:

> The affair then reduces itself to this syllogism: whatever Caesar, or the law of Caesar, decrees, must be obeyed; but the law decrees that he must be resisted in such a case; therefore he must be resisted. Now we have always taught the major premise, that the authorities must be obeyed in civil affairs; but we do not assert the minor premise, nor do we know anything about it. Wherefore we drew no conclusion, but referred the whole matter to the jurists,

of whom, it should be added, Luther cherished no high opinion.

About the year 1525 the student of the Reformation movement finds that the course of events becomes more troubled. With the enlargement of the Protestant constituency and the inevitable complication of issues Luther's problems multiplied, and the strain upon him became correspondingly more wearing. He found himself occupying the position of a little pope for his Germans, and

to him all manner of causes, great and small, were constantly referred. Very naturally men looked to him for guidance in all departments of the new church life which he had called into being. However willingly he might respond,—and he was never sparing of himself,—this constant drain upon his almost inexhaustible energies and sympathies was bound in the end to make itself felt. His marriage, while it brought into the Black Cloister the comfort and joy of home life and the companionship of a devoted helper, raised a hue and cry against him. The painful scenes of the Peasants' revolt caused a bitterness which was wide-spread and lasting.

Moreover Luther encountered increasing difficulty in maintaining purity of faith and life among his followers, whereas, by his principles and according to his expectation, this should have been ever easier. Theological divisions emerged to vex his soul. With Zwingli he could reach no agreement, and the forces of Protestantism seemed to be hopelessly divided. Luther's own health became impaired, and his indomitable spirit threatened at times to weaken. Not a serene old age, which his devoted followers would have wished for him, but anxious years, full of unremitting toil and marked at times by censoriousness and impatience, due in large part to the prolonged physical suffering which he was compelled to undergo,—this is the less inspiring picture which meets our eyes during his later years. "Instead of finding the world transformed into a paradise by his Gospel, he saw things continuing much as before, and his heart grew sick with disappointment," writes one of his most recent biographers. Yet it is Luther's glory that he never actually despaired. He died true to his faith, loyal to the cause to which he had given his life. "Do you stand firm by Christ and the doctrines you have preached?" asked Justus Jonas shortly before the end. "Yes," was Luther's simple answer. It was his last word on earth.

Two valuable studies of Luther's life have lately appeared on this side of the water, one by Dr. Arthur C. McGiffert, the well known professor of church history at Union Theological Seminary, the other by a younger scholar, Dr. Preserved Smith, fellow and lecturer in history at Amherst College. Apparently the approach of the four-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation,

which will be celebrated in 1917, had no especial influence on the production of either of these volumes, although they serve as timely reminders of it. Dr. Smith was moved to rewrite the life of Luther by the rapid advance in Reformation studies during the past ten or fifteen years, in which he himself has had a part through his publication of articles in the *English Historical Review* and elsewhere. Dr. McGiffert, who has long been an enthusiastic student of Luther, was moved to write by the request of the *Century Magazine*, whose editor conceived the happy idea of publishing a popular biography of the Reformer in serial form. As a book, this biography retains the special features which distinguished it in the magazine. It has many well-chosen illustrations; the text is free from notes of any kind; and, while an index is provided, there are no other technical paraphernalia, such as scholars are accustomed to expect in every modern work of history. The author has even dispensed with the conventional preface and introduction. The casual reader might not suspect that this life-story was written at first hand from the sources, and that, in the author's original manuscript, it was completely documented, but to the competent critic the quality of the work is sufficiently apparent. Yet it must be confessed that Dr. McGiffert is not at his best in "popular" writing. Excellent as this book is, and it deserves high praise, one feels that it would have been still better if the author had been addressing his usual public, and had not felt himself under the constraint of adapting his style to a more general audience.

Dr. Smith's volume tells the story of Luther's life at greater length than Dr. McGiffert's, and with more detail. It is furnished with notes, but by no means burdened with them, and it contains an extensive, although not exhaustive bibliography. In an appendix the author prints a few little-known letters, not found in the latest German edition of Luther's correspondence by Enders and Kawerau. The book bears evidence of diligent preparation for the author's task. It is written simply, in a direct, straightforward fashion, which is without rhetorical art but never dull, and the product is sure to be useful not only to students but also to general readers. A number of good illustrations add interest to the narrative. The plan of presentation is such as to necessi-

tate some repetition, and there are a few unnecessary digressions, —for instance, on the subject of indulgences and on the history of the sacramental system, but no doubt there may be readers who will be grateful for both. In literary style Dr. Smith's work suffers a little by comparison with Dr. McGiffert's, but hardly more than might be expected in view of the difference in method. In several respects the books admirably supplement each other. If one should say that he rises from their perusal with the conviction that Martin Luther was something more and greater than either of these two biographers has succeeded in depicting, that after all would be in a sense a compliment to both authors, for what better result of his labor could the biographer of a great man desire?

The reader who wishes to obtain a general view of Luther's life and personality will choose McGiffert; he who seeks to know his life in detail will read Smith. The reader who would carry away a unified impression of Luther's historical significance will turn to McGiffert; he who wishes to acquaint himself with each of the principal events of his career will find more to his purpose in Smith. McGiffert pays considerable attention to Luther's thought; Smith very little, believing, as he himself says, that a man's theology does not constitute an essential part of the biographer's task,—a judgment in which most persons will hardly agree with him. McGiffert pays his readers the compliment of taking much for granted; Smith pursues the safer, but less flattering, plan of explaining many things as he goes along. Where an historical judgment is required, it is reassuring to find the two authors generally in agreement. For example, both of them justify Luther's attitude towards the Peasants, although at the same time they condemn his intemperate and cruel tract.

The lack of any adequate treatment of Luther's thought by Dr. Smith is regrettable, especially in view of his frankly expressed opinion that Luther's "dogmatic system has lost part of its hold upon mankind, and seems likely to lose still more." The phrase, "dogmatic system," is not happily chosen. Luther was the founder of a theological method, not the framer of a system, and while it is no doubt true that he was led to take positions some of which are no longer tenable, yet the underlying principles on

which his method was based, and the method itself, are very much alive in modern Protestantism. His method and type of thinking are very clearly indicated by Dr. McGiffert, although naturally treated in a less systematic manner than in that author's recent essay on *Protestant Thought before Kant*. Not only the progress of his thought, but also the logical implications of it are pointed out, even where Luther himself failed to move on to them. One may see how far he went, and also how far short he stopped of the attainable position. One may see the reformer and the conserver united in the same person, and the apparent cross-currents of his thinking finally combined in what the Hegelians would call the "higher unity," which, however, Dr. McGiffert would never think of calling by that name. A single paragraph may suffice for purposes of illustration.

> In his attack on indulgences he had appealed from the indulgence-vendors to the pope; at Augsburg, from the pope-ill-informed to the pope-to-be-better-informed; and soon afterward from the pope to a council. Now, when the decision of a council was cited against him, he declined to be bound by it, and took his stand upon the sole authority of the Scriptures. But even this was not final. The Bible itself, he maintained, has to be used with discrimination, for parts of it do not teach Christian truth. He really substituted for all external authorities the enlightened conscience of the individual Christian. The Bible he read for himself and admitted the right of no council or body of men to read it for him. This, in principle, though he never fully realized it, and seldom acted upon it, meant the right of private judgment in religious things, and in it lay the promise of a new age. [Page 144.]

It would be difficult to state the fundamental position of Martin Luther more accurately or more compactly than Dr. McGiffert has stated it in these few short sentences. With equal clearness does the Union professor point out that Luther was at times far more powerfully influenced by conditions than he was by theories. What principles of reasoning could ever have impelled him or his followers to pass from their belief "that salvation is possible apart from the pope" to the "still more radical belief that it was impossible with the pope"? Verily there is an "iron logic of events" more cogent than the logic of the schools.

Neither of our two biographers is blind to Luther's faults. His intolerance, his coarseness, his wholesale employment of abusive language, his occasional seeming irreverence, are all noted by them both. The one conspicuous blunder of his career, namely his hesitating sanction of Philip of Hesse's bigamous marriage with Margaret von der Saal, is frankly condemned, although both authors do Luther the justice of recognizing that he acted conscientiously in this extremely awkward and difficult affair. Dr. Smith calls attention to the fact that the very qualities which have aroused the severest criticism of a later age were elements of strength to Luther in his own. The common people, naturally timid before rulers, took heart when they heard him address a king as "Henry, by God's disgust king of England," and then go on to call him a "damnable and rotten worm." It was not nice language, but honors were evenly divided between the two disputants, for Henry had called Luther "a wolf of hell." It was not the same thing however for a monk to launch invective against royalty as for a king to denounce a monk. Again, to hear the pope called "most hellish father" was a novelty,—rather a blasphemous one, many thought, but effective as a means of encouraging religious independence. Luther's bold speech seemed to strip the mighty of their tinsel, and to invite a judgment based not on crowns and mitres but on character, manhood's universal test.

Luther's intolerance of certain other Protestant leaders, especially Zwingli and Schwenkfeld, while historically intelligible, is harder for the modern mind to condone. One rises from each fresh perusal of the proceedings at the Marburg conference with the deepened conviction that if ever two men ought to have put aside their differences and worked shoulder to shoulder in the same cause, Luther and Zwingli were the men. Luther himself was convinced that if the forces of Protestantism were only united, "all the gates of hell and all the papacy and all the Turks and all the world" could not harm them. Yet to the Swiss reformer he seemed unalterably opposed. Only one short month before his death he wrote this paraphrase of the first Psalm: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the sacramentarians, nor standeth in the way of the Zwinglians, nor sitteth in the seat

of the men of Zürich." Towards Schwenkfeld he was, if possible, even more bitter: "The Lord rebuke thee, Satan, and may the spirit which called you, and the race you run, and all your fellow sacramentarians and Eutychians, go with you and your blasphemies to perdition." Religious toleration was evidently not within the circle of Luther's interests. Yet it was in principle involved in his position, and its coming throughout all Protestant lands was only a question of time. In fact it was largely due to him that it came at all.

The two biographies which have here concerned us are welcome additions to our Luther literature. It is much to be desired that they should be widely read. Fresh interest in the German leader and a more adequate popular conception of his extraordinary service to the world will be certain to follow their perusal. If they fail to arouse enthusiasm, they will at any rate serve the cause of sound knowledge. Our torches can still be kindled at the altars whereon Carlyle and Freytag lighted their sacrificial fires. For the worthy interpretation of a great life is something other than the narrative of its outward happenings, however faithfully recorded,—something other than the transcription of its words and thoughts. In order to catch the full significance of a man like Martin Luther, one must needs feel a spiritual kinship with him, such as was felt by the Scottish hero-worshipper. And to portray him to the world, one must possess something of the patriotic sympathy, the artistic insight, and the dramatic power of the author of *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit.* It is no easy task to cross an interval of four hundred years, and make the dim and shadowy figures of a far-off age take on the aspect of reality. Few are the prophetic writers upon whom such gifts of re-creative vision are bestowed. Most of us, authors and readers alike, must be content with writing or reading simple annals of the past, wherein we are constantly aware that the figures which pass across the stage are the figures of the dead, and all our chronicling is but an inscription on their tomb. They lived once; they live no more. But one day there comes the literary artist,—and then they live again before our eyes.

LUTHER AND OTHERS

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The recent books on the life of Luther by Dr. Preserved Smith and Dr. A. C. McGiffert may well rouse new consideration of Luther's religious experience. America was dominated by Calvinism, but there is small reward today in going back to Calvin, who applied the logic of a legal mind to a subject beyond the sphere of jurisprudence. Luther, on the other hand, was trying to utter the apprehensions of a great heart. Calvin's thought is dead. Luther's heart still throbs. We shall perhaps understand our own hearts more clearly if we apply religious psychology to his.

Religious psychology is not all pathological. True, some of its devotees write of ecstasies and trances and convulsive conversions and talking in tongues and the loss of the sense of personality. They tell of subliminal selves and intellectual visions and visual or auditory hallucinations. They describe primitive or still surviving methods of inducing these states by wine or dancing or howling, or by starvation and repression of sleep, by terrifying images or by hypnotic suggestion. If a man demurs that he is seeking for something still rational, he is answered that religion is not rational, and then, if honest, he may confess that he has no religion, since he has none of these pathological experiences, and in fact does not desire them. Such a man may take great comfort in Luther. That "Philistine of genius" understood religious experience as the activity of normal and healthy consciousness, and he understood that this normal and healthy consciousness was evoked by truth. He meant that people could have a complete and perfect religious experience without tampering with the balance of a clear and self-possessed mind and without getting under or over the threshold of natural consciousness.

It is true that Luther was not a rationalist, and he would, if on the scene today, heartily indorse our "anti-intellectualists." He certainly did not identify religion with the acceptance of an opinion on logical grounds. He would agree that faith is not logical

knowing, not the ethical response of the sense of obligation, not the same thing as the perception of beauty. He would say that it is a form of consciousness specifically different from all these,—namely, faith or the religious consciousness. But in his inelegant way he would declare that faith is always an activity of a wide-awake, unbefuddled consciousness. He would also declare that this activity has its stimulus in the old familiar truth of the Fatherhood of God, and that the truth is given in a concrete human image of God, namely, in the Jesus of whom we read in the Bible and who is preached in church. He would insist that religion is psychologically intelligible and healthy, and that to be religious does not require any injections of new forces from without or any impartation of new capacities or new organs. Religious experience comes when the truth essential to that sphere is presented to a man just as he is, without supernatural additions, and when the man's self responds in the psychological manner proper for such a truth. Luther called the truth in question the Word of God. The psychological response he called faith.

It will be objected to this that something has been omitted, namely, the action of God, since Luther spoke of faith as divinely caused. We are, however, omitting what for Luther was a constant factor in all experience. Luther did not mean, in speaking of the *gift* of faith, that an individual miracle broke through the natural nexus of experience so that the divine causation of faith is a supernatural interruption. He meant that the whole natural nexus, whether we mean things physical or things psychical, is grounded in the eternal divine will.[1] I am descended from parents who owed their being to parents before them and so on back to Adam, but the whole human line of descent in time has its cause in the timeless action of God. I am therefore in proper sense a creation of God without a supernatural intervention in my case. So God works timelessly through a truth transmitted historically from generation to generation and communicated by one mind to another. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. The operation of the truth in time is psychologically intelligible, not a miraculous intrusion, and yet the gift of God. This was Luther's answer to the Zwickau prophets.

[1] Cf. Otto, Darwinismus und Religion, p. 26.

Again it will be said that it cannot be so simple a story of a truth and its natural effect on consciousness, since in view of the fact that the truth did not evoke the religious psychological response in all, Luther held firmly to the doctrine of election and meant that God did not will the salvation of all. The answer is that Luther did indeed indulge in contradictory ideas, but that the main fact remains as stated. He did not hold the idea of election on general philosophical grounds, but as interpretation of the obvious fact that some men respond to a truth and others do not. The idea of election as a permanent reprobation of some is a too quick despair about this melancholy fact, and a little argument on our part might induce Luther to modify it with advantage to his general view. Our response to this truth or that has its own natural time, and the time is not the same for every man. For the youth in Wordsworth's "Excursion" the sunrise over the ocean's liquid mass was a "high hour of visitation from the living God," but some youths remain insensitive. Music may be mere sound to me, while it brings all heaven before your eyes. These cases of dulness and insensitiveness are no warrant for a doctrine of limited election. They do not prove a hopeless incapacity. They mean only that for some the day of visitation has not yet come, that the soul is not yet ready to make the proper human response. We may have no off-hand explanation of the inertia, of the fact of the *not yet*, but so long as it is a case of a given truth securing a normal human response we do not need to interpret the human delay as an inconsistency in the divine causality. The associated doctrine of man's total corruption of will and affection before the experience of faith simply cannot be reconciled with Luther's real and fundamental truth, which is that the religious truth wakens a normal religious response without any reconstitution of human faculties.

We are therefore ready to consider what the religious truth is and what the response of faith is, and this we shall do in complete independence of Lutheran theology, though with fidelity to the actual experience of Luther and to his account of that experience.

What, then, is the religious truth or Word of God, and what is the response of faith? Luther was reared in a circle sensitive to

fear and terror. Satan visited men with calamities, and the wrath of God menaced the sinner with eternal torment. God was the terrifying avenger of sin. Piety meant the practices and use of agencies by which one cancelled offences and merited mercy. The sincere and sensitive conscience that could not claim moral perfection must live in anxiety, and the anxiety was engrossing, paralyzing the free play of life and checking the spontaneity of active moral work with other men in the world's common interests. The malady here was that for its engrossing object consciousness had God as the wrathful avenger of sin. Luther won redemption, renewal, justification, salvation, eternal life—all these being the same thing—when his consciousness found another object than the wrathful, avenging power. The new object that he found was the infinitely gracious and forgiving and loving being whom the Christian calls Abba, Father. In his wretchedness and anxiety there was brought home to him the conviction that the power claiming from him a perfect life was all friendship and graciousness to him in spite of all his defects and sinfulness. This was not an opinion entertained on any logical ground. It was brought home to him. It established itself as truth to his soul, and thereby inevitably, spontaneously, irresistibly, arose the emotion blended of humility and trust and gratitude and joy which he called *Glaube*, or faith, the sense of complete liberation from fear, freedom from constraint of external mandate, freedom to do all the good which a spirit thus humble and trusting and sure of friendship in the Holy Authority would fain and naturally do. The vital point is that Luther discovered a new object, namely, God as Jesus presented God, and that it was discovery, not wish or surmise.

To apprehend this vital point adequately we need to observe the present situation. The starting-point for vast numbers of men today is not anxiety and fear before the avenger of human imperfection. The object that confronts them is not a God of wrath, but a world indifferent to the human soul and its ideals, its self-condemnation, its yearnings, its homesickness for the perfect.

> "Nature whose free, light, cheerful air
> Oft made thee in thy gloom despair."

The consequence for such men is not the paralysis of fear, but the paralysis of moral indifference, moral scepticism, the chill of spiritual loneliness in an unspiritual world. The salvation of such men comes when they discover through the veil of the phenomenal world a Being of holy perfection towards whom the high human ideals go out in embrace and who embraces man's soul through the very constraint of those ideals. When a man in this modern situation discovers that object, then he cries out that underneath are the everlasting arms, then he too is rejoicing and free, then for him too begins the spontaneous activity of all his higher nature. He too has awe and humility, love and peace and trust and liberation and enthusiasm. He too has all the rich emotional content that Luther called faith, and he finds in it a sense of linkage and affinity with the eternal, the timelessly worthful being. He too has salvation and knows eternal life.

It is obvious that the keenest interest attaches to the discovery of the object. What is that discovery? How is it that the verity becomes truth for a man's consciousness? In considering Luther in his relation to these questions, we need to discriminate between his retention of the definitions of the ecumenical creeds and the value they had for religious experience itself. We need to be free also to judge his experience by the aid of a modern understanding of religious cognition.

Luther was bound not to be a heretic, and we need not try to prove him one, but when Luther discovered the God who is compassionate love, it was not a discovery of the Trinity. As a conservative child of Christianity he held the doctrine, and in theological utterances seemed to place a high value on it. Even so he spoke of it as incomprehensible mystery which thought could not appropriate. It must be "*ungemeistert geglaubt.*" Yet he omitted it from his popular catechism and does not use it in his expositions of faith. The propositions of the Athanasian creed were not a part of the "Word of God," of the 'Gospel,' of the truth productive of religious experience. Luther does speak of the action of the Holy Spirit in this experience, but when examined the utterances are inapplicable to a third person in trinity. They are but variant expressions for the action of the Gospel, the Word, when he wishes to say that God acts by means of the

Word.[2] What Luther discovered was not God as trinity, but God as a gracious will, bestowing compassion and help, a will that is illustrated by the father of the prodigal son.

Luther discovered this divine Father in a man. Undoubtedly he kept the historic idea of the two natures in one person, and how valiantly he could use the *communicatio idiomatum* to meet all the difficulties can be seen in the disputation of February 28, 1540.[3] On the other hand it is equally certain that he consciously and clearly distinguished between such theological reflection and the meaning of the deity of Christ for religious experience. In that relation, he said, the union of two natures in one person is a belief that helps no man in the least.[4] Early, in the cloister of Erfurt, he concluded that to confess Christ as God meant to acknowledge spiritual good as received from him, —and Melanchthon formulated this: to know Christ was not to contemplate his two natures and the modes of incarnation, but to know the beneficent action of Christ on the soul. To the apprehension of religious experience the deity of Christ was not then a metaphysical truth. The meaning for experience is that Christ performs a divine office for men, namely, in revealing the gracious character of divine Fatherhood. There are passages in which Luther dwells on the thought that all believers may serve as Christ to others. The grace that comes to them through faith makes them, too, more than man; it deifies them.[5] Luther discovered the heavenly Father through the medium of a man. A man was the Word of God. Whatever divine majesty of being in an ontological sense belonged to this man was not recognizable in the religious experience. The object contemplated is "*lauterer Mensch*," Jesus as he was between the cradle and the cross. When theologians "bore through the sky with their heads and look around in heaven, they find no one, for Christ lives in the manger and in the woman's bosom." "The sophists have depicted him to show how he is at once both God and man—but this is only a sophistic knowledge of the Lord Christ. For Christ is not called

[2] Otto, Die Anschauung vom heiligen Geiste bei Luther, 1899.

[3] Drews, Disputationen, p. 585.

[4] Erlangen Edition, vol. xii, p. 163.

[5] Weimar Edition, vol. ii, p. 248.

Christ for the reason that he has two natures. How does that concern me? Rather does he bear this glorious and comforting name from the office and work which he took on himself." In preaching, said Luther, act as if you had a Jew to convert. At the outset be silent about Jesus as the Son of God. "I should say he was a man like any other, sent from God, and tell what benefit God has done to man through him. If now I had brought that home to his heart, so that his heart should burn within him and have love and pleasure in Christ, then I would carry him further to believe that Christ was God." Yet Luther would certainly not guarantee certainty of metaphysical comprehension. "He who will brood and reckon how to make it rhyme that God and man are one person, let him brood on forever and see what he gets out of it. Many have lost their wits over that reckoning and rhyming."

Luther spoke of Jesus as a born Jew, a child that ate milk and honey at his mother's breast, a boy that was stupid and ignorant like other small children. There is no room for doubt that Luther, like Augustine, meant *mediator tanquam homo*. As a man Jesus revealed to other men the gracious character of God. For the most part, when Luther spoke of the presence of Jesus to men in the sixteenth century, he meant his presence as the word in memory, the truth preached as it had been preached through the ages. The exception to this is his incongruous insistence about the omnipresence of Jesus in the sacramental bread and wine, and for this insistence there is a special motive.[6]

If we ask, then, what does it mean to discover the heavenly Father in this Jewish man subject to human limitations, the answer is plain. This Jewish man had a measureless love for undeserving sinners, living and dying for their spiritual good and their eternal blessedness, and this man was always and continually responsive to the divine wish and will. His sheer beneficence and graciousness, his human character and disposition, was a revelation of the heart and disposition of God towards men. Did Luther apprehend this in mere reflection? Did Luther believe that the man imaged God's disposition because he was told so in the gospels and epistles? Other men were told and

[6] Von Kügelgen, Luthers Auffassung der Gottheit Christi, pp. 55 ff.

remained cold. What was told became for Luther personal revelation,—the experience of faith; and the description of faith as we have heard it shows that it was no mere reflective assent to a justified conclusion. It was not assent but consent. After his Christian instruction from the Bible, from Augustine, from Bernard, from Staupitz, he had before him the picture of the great historic fact of Jesus. When he in his wretchedness of self-condemnation, in his need of complete love and favor from the Holy One who claimed holiness of him, saw the man of Galilee, himself the oracle of righteous demands and at the same time of measureless and self-sacrificing love to the meritless, he found in that character the same power of necessitation over his inner being as belonged to the power of right. It was supremely valid to him. Immediately, without a conscious process of reflective thought, there was a rejoicing consent of heart and conscience. It was an immediate apprehension and valuation by feeling—a non-logical affirmation of an eternal and unconditioned worth. That character, that personal being, had supreme constraining necessitation for him, and his own heart and will gave unreasoning direct consent. To say this same thing in other terms, the eternal divine Power had revealed to Martin Luther His gracious fatherhood through a man whose character and deeds imaged that fatherhood. The assertion that such religious faith is not a rational act means only that it was not a process of reflective reasoning. The object contemplated was not consciously referred to an inclusive concept. It was nevertheless an act of reason in a sense of reason higher than the logical understanding. Feeling is the act of reason when it is response to that which is valid object for the Ideas of the reason. Many of us under scientific education were taught that feeling was not an organ of discovery, but moral and aesthetic and religious experiences have shown us the contrary. In these highest activities of our nature, which are feeling activities, there is a glimpsing of an eternal and absolute worth, the worth that belongs to eternal and absolute being shimmering through the particular object of our experience. It is recognition—even though it is not the kind of recognition that the logical understanding makes. It is direct recognition without a clear consciousness of the standard by which we measure

the worth and identify the object as supremely worthful. But the standard is in our possession. It is a latent and obscure possession in the depth of our spirit, and it is the difficult work of critical philosophy to bring our possession to light as the Ideas of the Reason. The direct non-logical recognitions of the religious consciousness are possible by virtue of these deeply hidden Ideas.

It is profitable for us of American inheritance to turn from Luther to Edwards. At first we have a sense of complete contrast. The figure of the historical Jesus does not belong to the preaching of Edwards. When he had brought his hearers to the intense religious experience by which they could claim salvation, he observed that Christ was absent from their thought, and needed to remind them that Christ had purchased their salvation. Christ belonged to their theological reflection, not to their religious experience, just as Trinity and Two Natures were institutional truth for Luther. Edwards, however, is not a complete contrast to Luther. His "word of God" was called Divine Sovereignty. Every parishioner knew that word and believed it, but few had experienced it. The homiletic method of Edwards was to inculcate a sense of complete human degradation and moral inability, to intensify the sense of need by vivid pictures of the eternal torment for sin, to win acquiescence to the claim that God was absolutely just in so avenging sin. Then he presented to his shuddering hearers the ineffable clemency of God, who out of sheer sovereignty of good pleasure gave infinite bliss to some of the completely depraved and undeserving mass of men. Thereupon some from the depths of their own self-condemnation praised such sheer absolute mercifulness with disinterested approbation, aware now of the glory of such a graciousness, tasting the sweetness and the beauty of such a will, consenting to it with all the ardor of their being. Such a will as God's free sovereign will in the bestowal of mercy was recognized as absolutely worthful. The conception had always been in their minds. Now they had appropriated its truth with the humble, disinterested, rejoicing consent of a judgment of feeling. It was this direct aesthetic appropriation of feeling that Edwards regarded as experience of God,—and no one need gainsay him, even if he deems

that there was a perturbing error in this presentation of the Word of God. Men were indeed brought to a sense of present eternal being, the latent *a priori* capacities of their spirit being brought to play even by an imperfect presentation of the heavenly fatherhood. Edwards's preaching method was an effort to psychologically expel from consciousness those objections to the Calvinist conception of God which he himself had had to overcome. He quelled the sense of the injustice and cruelty belonging to the Calvinist God and he intensified the residue of conception which imperfectly stood for the Fatherhood of God. In comparison with Luther's experience there is an evident artificiality. In the Northampton parish God was recognized through an idea. In Erfurt God was seen through the person of a man. Edwards could have achieved his end with Mohammedan ideas. Luther's experience was Christian—and due to the historical Jesus.

The American who thinks of Edwards will think also of Channing. The youthful Channing had a religious experience which he always remembered with awe. He read in Hutcheson of man's capacity for "disinterested affection"—a cold and inexpressive term for an intense meaning—and then the full glory of such a dignity or divinity of human nature burst upon him. The infinitely worthful personal character was revealed to him, and, as the description given of the experience shows, it was a recognition of God through the human nature that imaged God. Here was the same kind of feeling recognition that belonged to Luther's experience, although the antecedent psychological steps are different. At that time Channing saw God through man, the analogue of God. His Christ was the Arian Christ, not a man. Later the Arian conception faded away, and Jesus became for him the supreme illustration of the divinity of human nature, the image of divine character. And the divine character so imaged was just the heavenly fatherhood of infinite love that Luther preached. The leading difference is that to the Boston preacher Jesus, being a measure of the human highest, is more than a comforter of conscience, is more distinctly the inspiration of an historic social work whereby the divine humanity seen in Jesus may find complete expression in the life of the community.

Dr. Martineau, again, springs to mind. Influenced by Priestley,

he held to a religion of divine causation. That thought was at first his word of God. Under Channing's influence he added the "religion of conscience." Now man was seen as the true image of God in proportion as man wins disinterested love. Finally Martineau arrived at what he called the religion of the spirit, by which he meant an ascent beyond reflection to personal communion, an exchange of love between the human spirit and the divine. He was passing from the apprehension of religion as devout thought to the apprehension of it as spiritual emotional experience, and this emotional recognition of God found increasing stimulus and provocation in the contemplation of the man Jesus, who was "the supreme witness to the spiritual union of man and God; a union which, were it constant as in him, might be deemed an Incarnation."

Luther experienced God through a man presented to his consciousness. So did Channing. So did Martineau. All alike meant the historical Jesus. In the case of Channing and Martineau, Jesus is seen in relation to the spiritual personality of man in the fulness of its meaning, and less exclusively in relation to the distresses of conscience. For all alike Jesus was, in the profound sense in which De Wette used the term, a spiritual symbol. He was a person who stirs the slumbering powers of our spirit to the recognition of the Eternal and Unconditioned Holy Father of Love. This is not Sabellianism. It does not identify the man and God. It means that through the man we glimpse the spiritual being in whom our being has its coessential ground and whose friendship revealed is our peace and the release of all our higher energy.

THE MYSTICISM OF MAETERLINCK

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The publication of *The Blue Bird* a year or two ago, and later its successful presentation on the stage, has awakened new interest in an author whose fame and influence seemed somewhat on the wane. It is now some twenty years since a little volume of essays by Maurice Maeterlinck caused the author to be proclaimed with a flourish of French trumpets as the "Belgian Shakespeare," the "European Emerson," and the "greatest mystic of the age." And these epithets and designations were not without some reason. *The Treasure of the Humble*, which helped to call them out, became of genuine soul-value to many people who could lay no claim to that particular virtue. The author's later essays, too, were conceived in a somewhat similar vein. *The Buried Temple* and *The Double Garden* contain hidden teachings of a deep and subtle character, which, being born of spiritual insight, shed light upon the path of destiny and duty.

As I say, however, the fame of Maeterlinck from a purely popular point of view has hardly been increased for some years past until his entrancing little play of *The Blue Bird* was put upon the stage. It was the first of the author's many dramas to prove popular,—the first perhaps that was clear as to its meaning; one might almost say, the first in which it was possible to know what the author really meant. He came out at last from the shadows into the sunlight; he forsook the depths of gloomy woods, where the scenes of so many of his previous plays were laid, and gave himself up to interpret the hearts and minds of little children. For this reason, as for many others, it seems worth while to study with some care the teachings of a man whose message might appear to be falling on a deaf, or somewhat heedless, world. In an age of socialism here is a prophet of individual salvation, and at a time when material welfare is the thing considered most, it is refreshing to find some one talking of the soul. And yet, in another way, it may be said that Maeterlinck is one of the most typical teachers that our age contains. He is a startling epitome

of the state of modern thought. In him and his teachings we may see what the world apparently is coming to, if not indeed where it actually has arrived.

We can hardly speak of Maeterlinck, however, as a distinctly modern prophet. There is a curious atmosphere of mediaevalism about all he writes; a mingling of the old and new, of the ancient East and the modern West. Although he lives in the twentieth century, and finds twentieth-century readers in abundance, there seem to cling about him the garments of the century that nurtured Francis of Assisi, or of that later age which gave birth to a Saint Theresa, or a Madame Guyon. To explain this we must look for a moment at the conditions out of which he came, and consider the environment that helped to shape him with delicate and gentle hands.

Professor Royce has said that William James was distinctly American in his philosophy. In his interesting address before the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa he called attention to the fact that James's pragmatism was an outgrowth of a civilization whose watchword is "efficiency," and that America, and no other country in the world, could have brought to birth and nourished to perfection that free and daring style, with its forceful images drawn from local life and speech. In James, he declared, "certain characteristics of our national life have found their birth. . . . His robust faith is the spirit of the frontiersman, of the gold-seeker, of the home-builder, transferred to the metaphysical and religious realm." And so it is, in a precisely opposite direction, with Maeterlinck. In his books, and the style they are written in, we seem to see a clear and true reflection of the quiet courtyards, the shaded convent gardens, and the bent and gray old gateways leaning up for support against some thick-set, moss-grown wall, that are so distinctive of his native land. There are few parts of Europe where the veil of mediaevalism lies so closely drawn across the face of things as it does in certain corners of Flanders. It is all the more apparent, moreover, for being violently rent and torn in places by the insistent and intruding hands of modern industry and enterprise. This is true, for instance, of such towns as Bruges and Ghent. Bruges is one of the sleepiest old cities on the continent of Europe. Its dull and stagnant but

winding, picturesque canals appear to find a counterpart in the slow-moving and deliberate currents of traffic and of trade. Nor is Ghent much different from it except in having felt more heavily the great black hand of modern factory life, which is a hand of death indeed to the beautiful, the artistic, and the picturesque. In Ghent, therefore, to a singular extent the new and old stand forth as deadly rivals, while the mediaeval and the modern jostle one another openly upon the streets. Many a gray old gabled house has been converted into a workshop, and a beautiful gothic guild-hall half turns its back upon a giant factory.

It was in this half-modern, half-ancient town of Ghent that Maurice Maeterlinck was born in 1862; and to those who are familiar with his writings it is evident that his early surroundings laid firm hold upon his thoughts. The son of Roman Catholic parents, he was sent for his education to the local Jesuit college, where, no doubt, it was hoped that his steps would be guided toward the priesthood. And, indeed, of the eighteen boys in his special class eleven followed this traditional course. But Maeterlinck revolted. Although, like his transatlantic master and acknowledged guide, he

> Liked a church and liked a cowl,
> And loved a prophet of the soul;
> Yet not for all his faith could see
> Would he a cowlèd churchman be.

To please his father he agreed to study law, although his thoughts were evidently far afield throughout the process. One case he argued and no more, and that he lost; after which he gave himself to the pursuit of letters. A vague, wild, fearful bit—"The Slaughter of the Innocents"—ushered him upon the field of literary strife, where now we are free to think how great a slaughter of innocent hope and promise it would have been, had parental influence sufficed to enclose and cramp him either in the church or court-house.

But when we have chronicled these outward facts of age, inheritance, and education, setting him down as a Belgian by birth, and a man of letters by brave resistance to familiar household foes, we are beset by difficulties. Further classification is not easy. Where does Maeterlinck belong among the authors of

the world, and how shall we describe him? He has written plays and he has written poetry; he is the author of essays and of biographical sketches. His writings include things spiritual as well as things scientific. He has dealt, in the most convincing way, with spiritual beauty; but perhaps the best of all his books is a scientific study of the humble and familiar bee. It may be because of this wide variety in his writings that he has been claimed by many schools and classified under many heads. He is called a symbolist, a moralist, a mystic, a clever dramatist, a spiritual essayist, a poet writing in the medium of prose, a naturalist and man of science who carelessly assumes the clothes of a philosopher. He has been likened to Marcus Aurelius, Plotinus, Madame Guyon, Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe, Emerson, and others; and the caustic Bernard Shaw has accused people of endeavoring to confer upon him the "Order of the Swan." Latterly he has been described as "the greatest living poet of love, if not the greatest poet of love that ever lived." And none of these appellations is without some reason to support it. In his love of the weird and gruesome he has some kinship with Poe. In his meditative vein he shows descent from the great Aurelius. I am not familiar enough with Walt Whitman to be able to pass upon his affinity there, but any one can recognize in his writings the influence of Tauler, Ruysbroeck, and their school.

One reason for these similarities is found, perhaps, in the fact, which may here be noted, that Maeterlinck is a persistent but discriminating borrower. He knows a good thing when he sees it, and he is not above being helped and taught by others. What he receives, however, it is hardly necessary to add, he thoroughly transforms and makes his own. Taking the crude, unminted metal, he passes it through the furnace of his glowing fancy and stamps it with a glory that it did not have before. Thus in his latest play of *Mary Magdalene* he frankly confesses himself indebted for two central features of the drama to Heyse's *Maria von Magdala*, and he frankly tells us in the preface that, when he wrote to Heyse and asked permission to use and develop the situations, his request was curtly and even threateningly refused. *Monna Vanna*, it has been pointed out, "owes its *milieu*, and one of its structural features, to Browning's *Luria*, while *Pelleas and*

Mélisande finds its roots in Dante's story of 'the two who go forever on the accursed air.'" Moreover, there can be no question of the kinship of *The Blue Bird* with *Peter Pan;* and the Belgian playwright, I believe, has bestowed on Mr. Barrie the title of godfather to the play. The greatest similarity, however, is undoubtedly with Emerson, who was himself so broad and free a borrower. Indeed, it is not without good reason that Maeterlinck has been hailed as the "European Emerson." Oftentimes, when you compare selected passages from the essays or writings of the two men, it is difficult to guess offhand which one of them is speaking. Which of them said this, for instance:

> Man is always throwing his praise or blame on events, and does not see that he only is real, and the world his mirror and echo. He imputes the stroke to fortune, which in reality himself strikes.

Those of us who have explored the treasure-chambers of *The Buried Temple* would perhaps select this as one of the gems to be discovered there. As a matter of fact, it occurs in Emerson's "Sovereignty of Ethics." Again we read:

> There are certain fastnesses within our soul that lie buried so deep that love alone can venture down, and it returns laden with undreamed jewels whose lustre can only be seen as they pass from our open hand to the hand of one we love.

That, we think, sounds familiar, and we search the essays on the "Over-Soul" and "Love"; but we must turn to the pages of *Wisdom and Destiny* to find it. Maeterlinck declares:

> What I *say* often counts for little; but my presence, the attitude of my soul, my future and my past, that which takes birth in me and that which is dead. . . . All this it is that speaks to you at that tragic moment.

And who, as he reads, can help thinking of Emerson's declaration:

> What you *do* speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say. Character speaks over our head. The infallible index of true character is found in the tone man takes.

Again, there is Maeterlinck's description of the "inevitable self" that waits to meet us at the end of all our journeys:

> Whether you climb up the mountain or go down the hill to the valley, whether you journey to the end of the world or merely

> walk around your house, none but yourself shall you meet on the highway of fate. If Judas goes forth to-night, it is towards Judas that his steps will tend.

And Emerson, we know, agreed with him:

> Travelling [he says, in speaking of self-reliance] is a fool's paradise. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea, and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from. I seek the Vatican and the palaces. I affect to be intoxicated with sights and suggestions, but I am not intoxicated. My giant goes with me wherever I go.

So there are other similarities which are too numerous to name. We remember Emerson's verses:

> Yon ridge of purple landscape,
> Yon sky between the walls,
> Hold all the hidden wonders
> In scanty intervals.

And we wonder if Maeterlinck did not have them somewhere in the back of his mind when he wrote:

> There are eternal crevices even in the humble walls of a hovel, and the smallest windows cannot take away a line or a star from the immensity of heavenly space.

But enough! As these quotations indicate, there can be no doubt of how Maeterlinck would classify himself if he were granted that extraordinary privilege. He is a Mystic, pure and simple. As a mystic he began to write, and as a mystic he reveals himself in all his more important works and studies. But before I go on to estimate him in this light, and to make a more careful analysis of his teaching, let me justify myself by his own deliberate words and judgment, and then let me hurriedly remind you of the essential teaching and the historical method of the mystics of all ages.

First of all let it be said that whether he makes good the title or not, Maeterlinck considers himself a genuine mystic. He is confident of his inheritance, and claims descent from Ruysbroeck and Tauler, from Philo and Swedenborg and Fox,—believing himself no foundling nor a son by mere adoption, but a spiritual heir. In his early writings he speaks enthusiastically of

the great Plotinus, who, he declares, "of all the intellects known to me draws nearest to the divine." He quotes from Porphyry and the gnostics as though he had fed his soul upon their writings and had not simply dipped into their mystic shadows, as so many are content to do. Moreover, in his writings he has carefully justified and eloquently defended the mystic philosophy and teaching. "Many people," he says, "take it for a wild, dark dream, crossed with vivid flashes of lightning, whereas, I believe that the writings of the mystics are the purest diamonds in the vast treasures of humanity; their truths have a strange privilege over ordinary truths, for they neither grow old nor die; and whether they come from India or Greece, they have neither country nor date, and wherever we meet them they are calm and real as God himself." "We are dealing here," he adds, "with the most *exact* of *sciences*, and not with a dream, for dreams have no roots, while the glowing flower of divine metaphysics has its mysterious roots in Persia and in India, in Greece as well as Egypt." These, it is clear enough, are the words of a man who believes that he has found the philosophy of life, containing definite truths of the deepest spiritual nature.

Of mysticism in general I need to speak in none but the briefest possible way, and that for the simple sake of clearness. We shall agree, I suppose, that mysticism is one of the many paths in life which lead to God. More than this, it is not merely one of the paths, it is the straightest path, and, according to those in every age who have found it out and gone that way, it leads directly into the presence of the Holy and Divine. The mystic is one who looks within, lives within, and loves to interpret all things from the standpoint of the soul. He believes in the supreme guidance of the "inner light," and holds to the necessity of trusting instinct, and honoring emotion. While the naturalist looks without, the mystic peers within; while the man of science studies the phenomena of outward nature, the mystic is absorbed with the phenomena of human nature. The one inquires, the other dreams; the first compares and classifies occurrences in the natural world, the second composes himself and contemplates things in the spiritual world which is centred in himself. Always, however, the true mystic pursues this inward path with one great

end in view; and because of the gaining of that end he has secured the attention of the world. That end is the consciousness of the divine, and a conviction that God is the great Reality. "The mystics," says Professor Rufus Jones, in his recent and most rewarding volume entitled *Studies of Mystical Religion*, "in all ages and in all lands—*semper et ubique*—have been intent on finding a direct way to God"; and he adds, in the introduction to his book, "I shall use the word mystic to express the type of religion which puts the emphasis on immediate awareness of relations with God, on direct and intimate consciousness of the Divine Presence. It is religion in its most acute, intense, and living stage." "Moreover," he says, "it has been the contention of mystics in all ages that God Himself is the ground of the soul, and that in the deeps of their being all men partake of one central life. The genuine mystic, therefore, no more wants arguments to prove God's existence than the artist wants arguments to prove the reality of beauty, or the lover to prove the worth of love."

From all of this, and a great deal more that might be said or quoted, it appears that mysticism is a path of life, or avenue of thought, which, when properly pursued, conducts to a definite goal. It is a process, but it is likewise an end; it is a way of approach to truth along which, or more particularly at the end of which, one central and commanding truth has always been discovered. The way is the way of the individual soul,—along the shadowy road of quiet introspection,—but it ever has been held to lead to the consciousness of the Over-soul.

Accepting, then, as accurate these modern definitions of mysticism and its method, we go on to inquire in what sense Maeterlinck may properly be classed as a member of this historic and highly honored school. To what extent and how accurately may he be looked upon as a follower of Plotinus and Swedenborg and a true disciple of Emerson?

Now that Maeterlinck believes in the path that has been trodden in all ages by the mystics of the world there cannot be the slightest doubt. In all his leanings toward the shadowland of Self, in all his love for things unseen, in all his praise of silence, too, and his perception of the treasures that the humble hold,

our author is undoubtedly a mystic. He follows in the footsteps of those seers and solemn prophets of the soul who have declared, since the earliest time of human thought, that "within is the fountain of life,"—that within is to be found the secret of contentment and the soul of truth. A Latin motto which is said to be written over his study door fitly gives expression to his faith. The motto may be translated:

> Whoever turns his outer sense
> To see his soul aright,
> He hears when no one speaks to him,
> Walks seeing through the night.

Yes, in the methods he pursues, as in the cravings of his nature, this Belgian thinker is distinctly mystical. Leave him alone for a moment, and he loses himself amid the heavy shadows that are cast by the pointed arches of some buried temple in the depths of human life; let his footsteps take their natural course, and they lead him along the winding pathways of that "double-garden," one-half of which extends across the sloping hillside of the human soul. "*La vie intérieure*" is his first and last, and it sometimes seems, his only real concern. The supreme aim of life, he tells us, is to "keep open the great road that leads from the seen to the unseen." As some one has written of him, he "comes with gentle words of wise and aspiring sincerity to impress upon the world the belief that the development and disclosure of the human soul is the ultimate aim and goal of existence." Here, in a nutshell and phrased in his own enticing way, is his teaching in this regard. "I have grown to believe," he writes, "that an old man, seated in his arm-chair, waiting patiently with his lamp beside him, giving unconscious ear to all the eternal laws that reign about his house, interpreting without comprehending the silence of doors and windows and the quivering voice of the light, submitting with bent head to the presence of his soul and of his destiny,—I have grown to believe that he, motionless as he is, does yet live in reality a deeper, more human, and more universal life, than the lover who strangles his mistress, the captain who conquers in battle, or the husband who avenges his honor."

Again, to give another illustration of his thought, it is natural that such a man, when writing of so universal yet so personal

a thing as justice, should seek and find it in the secret place that is dearest and most familiar to him. "Justice," he says, "had been imagined everywhere except in man. It had dwelt in the sky. It had lurked behind rocks, it had governed the air and the sea, it had peopled an inaccessible universe. Then at last we peered into its imaginary retreats, we pressed close and examined; its throne of clouds tottered, it faded away; but at the very moment we believed it had ceased to be, behold, it reappeared and raised its head once more in the very depths of our heart."

Moreover, Maeterlinck is a mystic in this respect, that his books have hardly an impress of an epoch. Although his latest volume bears the title of *The Measures of Time*, his thoughts, his words, his innermost teachings, are practically timeless. It has been truly said of his books that most of them might have been "conceived and written a thousand years ago, and might equally, no doubt, be produced in any one of the thousands of years to come." So, too, he is a mystic in his occasional lapses into the exaggerated, the foolish, and grotesque,—a respect in which the mystics have always sinned most gravely. Thus Angelus Silesius, a daring mystic of the seventeenth century, declared: "I know that God cannot live a moment without me. If I perish he must for want of me give up the ghost. I am as important to Him as He to me. I help maintain His being, as well as He mine." Emerson approached him when he declared, "The simplest person who in his integrity worships God becomes God," and added, "I become a transparent eye-ball. I am nothing. I see all."

Maeterlinck's exaggerations run along a different line, and he leans over the edge of sanity particularly when he deals with death. "Our death," he says, "is the mould in which our life flows; it is death that has shaped our features. Of the dead alone should portraits be painted, for it is only they who are truly themselves." And again he says, "Whoever meets me knows all that I have done and shall do;—nay, he knows the very day on which I shall die." Of wisdom such as this we may well cry despairingly with the Psalmist, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

But if Maeterlinck is a genuine mystic in such respects as these,

and in others that we shall take account of later, let us pause here and make it evident that in the supremest sense of all—so far as arriving at the goal which the mystics of all ages have felt convinced that they reached—he distinctly and definitely fails. The old story tells us that the Magdalene went down to the dew-swept garden in the early morning light and found one waiting for her at the gate whom she took at first to be the gardener, but who turned out to be the very Saviour of her soul. And so it has been throughout the centuries, as we have seen, with the men and women whom we speak about as mystics. Their distinction has been always this,—that the way they went has brought them to the very presence of the Highest. With Maeterlinck, however, although his "thoughts all gravitate in a visionary way to the Eternal, to the Absolute," he yet never finds, nor feels, himself face to face with a Supreme and Eternal Being who is both creator and inspirer of life. He goes down ever and again into the spacious garden of the soul, and he loves to walk and watch there. He caresses the shadows, and converses with the flowers. The bees are humming in the heavy afternoon of speculative thought, and he sees them store away the honey in the cells of quiet contemplation. But in all his musing, and his sense of mystery, he meets no shadowy form who asks for recognition, and to whom he cries out in an ecstasy of joy, "Rabboni."

Maeterlinck, in other words, is a mystic, but a mystic who does not arrive. He sets forth on the historic road, but fails to turn up at the historic goal. He takes the well-worn path on which other pilgrims have journeyed with joy because of what it led to; but with him not joy, but fear, is met along the way which leads him nowhere in particular. Never, for example, in the writings of this so-called mystic do you find an exultant cry like that of Emerson: "O my brothers, God exists! There is a soul at the centre of Nature and over the will of every man, so that none of us can wrong the universe. The whole course of things goes to teach us faith. We need only obey." Nowhere does he proclaim the assurance that man can acquaint himself at first-hand with deity. Instead, what do we find? Only a heavy silence as to the mystery of mysteries,—the Power supreme above

us all. When we come to the end of what he has to say, we see before us a question mark. Here, for example, is a case in point. In *The Buried Temple* he declares: "It was well that the Poet who found in his God an unquestionable ideal should incessantly hold before us this definitive ideal. But today, if we look away from the truth, from the ordinary experiences of life, on what shall our eager gaze rest?" Again, we come upon some cryptic utterance like this: "It is not the incomprehensible in Nature that masters and crushes us; but the thought that Nature may possibly be governed by a conscious, superior, reasoning Will,—one that, although superhuman, has yet some kinship to the will of man."

Moreover, and what is worse, there are other connections in which he seems distinctly unreligious. Instead of finding God as the result of his quest, what he reveals is nothing but a subconscious, or a higher, self. "Within us," he says, "is a being that is our veritable ego;—our first-born; immemorial, illimitable, universal, and probably immortal. Our intellect, which is merely a kind of phosphorescence that plays on this inner sea, has as yet faint knowledge."

Yes, it is self, mysterious, hooded, veiled, incomprehensible self that he finds at the end of all his inner searchings; and in this self his teachings find a centre. There is neither good nor evil, neither pain nor pleasure, neither ease nor hardship, neither calamity nor happiness,—except as thinking, and our inmost feelings, make them so.

Maeterlinck, I repeat, therefore, is mystical, but not a mystic; or, let us say again, he is a mystic who does not arrive. He believes, so he tells us, in a faculty in man higher than intelligence, a faculty which he calls "mystic reason"; but that faculty, wonderful as it is, cannot penetrate the veil, nor conduct us through the realm of shadows into light. Though it discloses wonders, it knows nothing about One who is the source of wonder; and though it recognizes beauty, it knows nothing of One who is the architect of beauty.

In the ancient temple of Edfu, the most symmetrical and best preserved of all the old Egyptian temples, one is led along through gateway after gateway, from outer sunlight, fierce and glaring,

into shadow and then into deeper shadow, until one moves in almost utter darkness. Chamber opens into chamber, each one at a slightly higher level than the one preceding. Outside, behind the towering pylons, where the people gathered, is the spacious open court, roofed in by the azure sky. Within, at the opposite and furthermost extremity, is the Holy of Holies, open to the priests alone, where the statue of the god was niched. It is a fascinating temple to explore, and at last, when the heavy gloom has silently embraced one, when chamber after chamber has been reached, and hall after hall been left behind, one comes to that holiest of holy chambers, with its solemn little niche,—a niche of dark and solid granite in a dark and silent room. It is a dramatic moment, and one which comes to be the more dramatic when one discovers that the niche is—*empty!* The statue of the god is no longer there. His worship ceased long since, and the image was thrown down, broken, and destroyed.

Thus it is in the temple of thought that Maeterlinck has built. It is a perfect structure in its way, and enriched by the highest art. It is dim and suggestive, too, with shadowy corridors that open toward the sacred shrine of life. But the niche in the Holy of Holies is an empty niche; there is nothing there. If we worship, we must worship an abstraction; if we kneel, it must be before a reach of dark and impenetrable wall.

Moreover, the analogy of the Egyptian temple, with its passages that lead one into solemn darkness, suggests another truth which is characteristic of Maeterlinck. The ordinary mystic pursues his way along the hidden avenues of life, but comes out at the last upon a bright and broadening plain. He plunges into secret darkness, but rejoices to have found thereby a glorious light. With our Belgian philosopher, however, the gloom is never lightened, the shadow never left behind. The darkness is what he revels in; and, with the darkness, all forms and fears and strange forebodings that cannot bear the light. Whether or not he is fond of shuddering himself and finds in it a species of religious awe, he is fond of making others shudder and grow cold. He is master of the art of stimulating the creepy feelings of life. In some of his plays he seems anxious to set forth mystery as something that is altogether terrifying. We see people huddled to-

gether at a window out of which they fear to look, or pressing against a door which they dread to open.[1] The scene is generally laid on the edge of a dark and pathless wood. In the play which he called *The Blind* the people are lost in a forest, and in *Pelléas and Mélisande* the lovers first encounter one another in a lonely and distant glade. The shadows are heavy. The dusk is everywhere. The sun is setting,—in fact, it has never fully risen. But if the gloom of the silent forest is on one side of his plays, the gloom of the stormy ocean, with tumbling waves that roll in from a boundless deep, is on the other. The ocean is always lashed into fury by a storm, while the sky is dark and full of thunder. Situated thus, between the two great natural symbols of impenetrable mystery, the poet pictures for us a dark and gloomy castle which is half in ruins. In the courtyard of the castle, or perhaps by the edge of the forest, there is a deep, black well, and beneath the crumbling castle walls we are led along dismal passageways and creaking corridors into silent crypts and gloomy dungeons. All the time the wind is howling, and the waves of the troubled sea are beating at the gates, and threatening to burst through the habitation man has built.

I remember that as a child I used to be strangely fascinated by the title of a book which stood upon the library shelves at home. I cannot recall that I ever opened it, and to this day I do not know exactly what it dealt with; but it was called *The Night Side of Nature.* That is the side of nature which appeals to Maeterlinck; and it is the side of human nature, too. His very characters are shadows, and when we strive to grasp their meaning they fade away into nothingness. Now all of this is mystical in the popular and superficial sense of being hazy and indistinct; but philosophically mystical it is not. The genuine mystic always deals with life;—with soul-life and with life in heaven, if you will, but still with life. Maeterlinck, however, is forever exploring the spaces of the soul, where death and gloom, not life and light, are what prevail. Some one has called him a "meteorologist of the soul"; and so he is. But like many another of the ordinary craft it is storms and tempests that he usually reports.

It is interesting to notice, however, that within recent years

[1] A. Symons, The Symbolic Movement in Literature, p. 158.

he has left definitely behind him this morbid attitude of youth. In place of a dread of the unknown has come trust, and an almost superstitious awe has yielded to complacent confidence. In other words, he has gradually shaken off the shadow of the Jesuit college where he studied and has come out into the noon-day of the twentieth century. So much is this the case that critics, who are always bound to find some fault, are now complaining of his easy optimism, and are tearing rents in what they think the flimsy garments of his latter-day philosophy. But the change has really been a growth, and a natural and wholesome one at that. What is more, it has made him in some respects a truer mystic than he was at first. He himself has given expression to this change, and says:

> It is consoling to observe that you follow the same route as the soul of this great world: that we have the same intentions, the same hopes, the same tests, and almost,—except for our dreams of justice and pity, which is our own specific work,—the same feelings. . . . That is why our attitude in the face of the mystery of these forces is changed. It is no longer that of fear, but of courage. It is no longer the kneeling of a slave before his master, but it permits the look of equal to equal; for we carry within ourselves the equal of the most profound and the greatest mysteries.

And yet I do not say all this in the spirit of foolish criticism. I am not of those who are disposed to quarrel with talent, and least of all with genius; especially when the genius is one that seeks the mystery of the soul for inspiration, and proclaims the saving grace of individual character. Moreover, Maeterlinck being a mystic who does not arrive, he seems to me particularly typical of the age in which we live. Like all great writers he voices the unspoken feelings of his time; and among the interesting phenomena of the particular period in which we live is the somewhat depressing fact that while the thirst for the divine remains unchanged, the means for the slaking of that thirst appear to be taken from us. People wish to believe, but often cannot. They have religion, or something which passes for it; but oftentimes are not religious. How many are the people who might fitly be described as agnostic mystics! They have the instincts and desires which fired and inspired saints and seers of old; but far

too often they find themselves compelled to go without the glorious vision and the all-sustaining faith.

In this respect our Belgian prophet is among the most modern of all writers, reflecting the doubts and wonderings of his day. But while perhaps the most significant thing about him as a mystic is the one that I have pointed out, it would be a mistake and, worse than a mistake, it would be a grave injustice to ourselves and him to pass over without emphasis many other features in his teachings which are hardly less distinctive, and of very positive worth. Although he may not reach the mystic goal and achieve direct vision of the Highest, yet on the way he has seen and taught us things of great importance. His very "glorification," as Chesterton calls it, "of the inside of things at the expense of the outside," is not only a corollary of his mystical bent of mind, but a corollary which calls for every emphasis that can possibly be given. Welcome, indeed, in these days of superficial, and often silly, materialism, is the prophet of a scientific mysticism; and thrice welcome at a time when most of us are intent on improving the mere conditions of life is a well-accepted teacher who enforces the supremacy of life itself. The value of Maeterlinck's teaching, therefore, has the general value of all teaching which calls attention to self-reliance, self-development, and the need of spiritual culture. And it has much more than this. Under the spell of his genius the importance of the life within is given fresh interpretation and has taken on a dignity and glory which hardly had been given it before.

Most important, perhaps, but at any rate of genuine value and significance, is the teaching of this man in regard to the soul's relationship, or attitude, to trouble and disaster. He gives new emphasis and meaning to the old assertion that "the soul is its own refuge, and its own defence." Nowhere does he rise so close to ecstasy, or glow with such a fervor of conviction, as when he pictures a human soul facing some terrible and inevitable calamity and calmly defying it, saying in substance to the shadowy form, as it approaches, "You can have no power over me except as I supply the weapons." That is dramatic and sublime. For how often do people exaggerate and arm their troubles, making them terrible, indeed, and capable of inflicting mortal wounds!

"Physical suffering apart," he says in *Wisdom and Destiny*, "not a single sorrow exists that can touch us except through our thought; and whence do our thoughts derive the weapons wherewith they attack or defend us? We suffer very little from suffering itself; but from the manner wherein we accept it, overwhelming sorrow may spring."

Less unique, and much more commonplace, is his constant reiteration of the fact that the soul is the source and seat of all true content and happiness. This trite and familiar truth is lifted out of the dust of what is familiar and out-worn, being presented to us at the hand of genius in new and shining garments. "All men can learn to be happy," he assures us, "and the teaching of it is easy. . . . Smiles are as catching as tears, and periods men have termed happy were periods when there were some who knew of their happiness. . . . There is more joy in the smallest joy whereof we are conscious than in the approach of the mightiest happiness that enters not into our soul."

Again, Maeterlinck stands for what we may call the democracy of the moral life. He believes in the Republic of the Soul. The world within, as he sees it, pays little attention to the ethical gradations and classifications which are so distinctive of our class-morality. "Not to all men," he reminds us, "is it given to be hero or genius, victorious, admirable always, or even to be simply happy in exterior things; but it lies in the power of the least-favored among us to be loyal, and gentle, and just; to be generous and brotherly;—he that has least gifts of all can learn to look on his fellows without envy or hatred, without malice or futile regret; the outcast can take his strange, silent part (which is not always that of least service) in the gladness of those who are near him; and he that has barely a talent can still learn to forgive an offence with an ever nobler forgiveness."

He applies the same deep principle to degrees of insight, or revelation, believing with Emerson,

> There is no great, and no small,
> To the Soul that maketh all.

"Not an evening passes," he is convinced, "but the smallest thing suffices to ennoble the soul"; and he is very sure, as he says

in *The Treasure of the Humble*, "that the day you lingered to follow a ray of light through a crevice in the door of life, you did something as great as though you had bandaged the wounds of your enemy, for at that moment you no longer had any enemies."

Maeterlinck has stood very attentively and reverently close up to the narrow wall that separates the finite from the infinite, the human from the divine. If he has not heard certain voices that have always seemed of chief significance, let us at least be thankful that he has told us honestly what he does hear, and in language of transcendent beauty. The world is full enough of echoes, and it is hardly worth our while to pay attention to them. But when a living voice is raised that tells of personal revelation, and expresses some of our unuttered longings, we may wisely stop and pay attention. And in the meantime we may well believe that not yet has this thinker given us his full or final word. It is much to be hoped that it is with him, as with the fine patrician house in Bruges which bears, he has told us, on beams and pediment the suggestive device,—"Within me there is more."

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